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PERIODICAL DEPARTMENT

EDITORIAL

# A MESSAGE FROM CHICAGO

Three percentage points—Harold Washington's margin of victory in the Chicago mayoral election—do not remove the stain of an ugly and dangerous episode in the history of American race relations. It was not the campaign that was "divisive," as many political analysts reported. Washington's candidacy focused the deep divisions that have befouled Chicago politics for many years. This time there was no way to ignore the blacks' anger at their exclusion from public life, nor to disguise the hostility of the majority to the minority's bid for power.

Washington's slim success will hardly harmonize the races, even though the edge of antagonism will doubtless soften. But the message of the election lies less in the final vote tally than in the extraordinary mobilization of the black community which marked the electoral season.

Blacks constitute about 40 percent of Chicago's population, and they have a strong impact on the cultural life of the city. But the heavy hand of the white Democratic machine on the levers of local power, together with the decline of a militant civil rights movement (some of whose leaders were murdered or harassed by the police), had demoralized and depoliticized the black population. The Washington campaign changed that. It created a sense of excitement and optimism about the possibilities of power in people who had long ago given up on the political system. And it pointed to the growing influence of urban blacks on national politics.

Black voters have elected the mayors of eight of America's largest cities, the governor of New York, and many members of Congress and local officials. There is power in that mobilization, and it is useful not only for one group's interests but also as a force for reform, progressive politics and social equality, which will ultimately benefit citizens of all races and classes.

KIRKPATRICK & KOPPEL
Robert Karl Manoff

SEDER POLITICS
Calvin Trillin

BANKING ON BLOOD
Arthur L. Caplan

THE SOURCES OF D.M. THOMAS
Lore Dickstein

'HUNGRY HEARTS'
Brina Caplan

CHAMBER ORCHESTRAS
Linda Sanders

A NEW POLITICAL CULTURE

# THE RETURN OF COLD WAR LIBERALISM

ANDREW KOPKIND

"Liberalism is out of fashion," Arthur Schlesinger Jr. wrote from the lower depths of the 1950s, "and liberals are out of office." The cold war of that decade did more than freeze East-West relations. It produced a profound chilling effect on the exercise of progressive politics on the home front. Excluded from power and denied prestige, the liberal brokers of the New Deal generation had to scramble merely to stay alive. And out of their isolation and insecurity—and their struggle for survival—came a new category of political behavior: cold war liberalism. It was both a sensibility and a strategy, a defensive posture toward the warriors of the right and an aggressive attack on the rebels of the left. Looking right, the cold war liberals affirmed the end of ideology, the vitality of the center, the failure of the socialist god. Looking left, they baited the hell out of Reds, fellow travelers and "progressives."

Now a new chill is in the air. The powerful producers of the plays of history have opened a sequel to their old cold war hit, and many of the cultural props that supported the first run are coming back into style. There's a retro look to the political landscape, the feel of the Dulles days. Rebellion, utopias and tender-mindedness are *out*; conformity, realism and hard-heartedness are *in*. Liberals—who always manage to mediate the terms of discourse—are out of high office and high fashion; and once more many of them have enlisted in a cold war, with their familiar postures and attacks.

The liberal media are in the forefront. CBS's *60 Minutes*, that exemplar of electronic liber-

(*Continued on Page 503*)

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# LETTERS.

## A PROTEST, NOT A HECKLE

*Berkeley, Calif.*

Many thanks for Art Goldberg's "Right to Heckle" [*The Nation*, April 2], though we prefer to characterize our action as a vocal protest rather than as a heckle. Along with many others, we could not remain silent when the opportunity arose to speak to a prime architect of U.S. policy in Central America. To be silent would have been to acquiesce to that policy and to the murder that is a part of it.

The snowballing of this incident into an event of national significance has had two important consequences. The first is the attempt by the academic right to use our protest, and similar actions at Smith College and the University of Minnesota, to argue that university administrators went too far in "granting concessions" to students in the 1960s and 1970s. A March 10 editorial in *The Wall Street Journal* by Diane Ravitch espouses this point of view. Of course, "granting concessions" is a favorite euphemism for recognizing rights that had previously been denied—in this case, political rights on campuses.

Prof. William Muir, chair of Berkeley's political science department, complemented Ravitch's views in a March 18 interview on *All Things Considered*: "What the Kirkpatrick incident is, is part of the corrective process in bringing free speech back to the Berkeley campus." Thus was evinced the viewpoint of those who mistake orderly speech for free speech. Orderly speech exists, for example, in El Salvador, but free speech does not.

The second consequence is the attempt by White House officials to meddle in the affairs of the university by pressuring Reagan-appointed regents to "do something to punish the demonstrators" (according to an anonymous regent quoted in the March 16 *Daily Californian*). Do these officials really intend to arrange extrajudicial punishment for those who exercised their constitutional rights in opposing the Administration's policy? . . .

The intervention of the Reagan Administration at Berkeley is no more allowable than is its intervention in Central America. Both pose grave perils.

*Students Against Intervention in El Salvador*

## JEANE'S MINNESOTA EXPERIENCE

*St. Paul*

Jeane Kirkpatrick was here too, at the University of Minnesota, and what happened was only a little different from the scene Art Goldberg described at the University of California at Berkeley. There was heckling but no obscenity. Kirkpatrick completed her speech and answered questions. No one suggested punishment for the hecklers (discounting the rumor that she herself did), though most editorialists and letter-writers, citing their outrage at the bad manners of the hecklers, cried "abuse of the right of free speech."

What does it say about Americans that no one commented that Kirkpatrick might have smoothed the situation with a little humor or a little compassion, or that she might have put aside her prepared speech and spoken from the heart? That no one weighed the sin of heckling lighter than the cold contempt she expressed for her audience? That no one complained of being talked down to: Kirkpatrick brought to a literate audience a warmed-over academic *and* rhetorical speech—"Has the United Nations Outlived Its Usefulness?"—the very day before the papers were full of the Administration's proposal to send more military aid to El Salvador? . . .

*M. Elizabeth Ellis*

## SOCIAL SECURITY SAVED?

*New York City*

The debate over Social Security has been so one-sided that even *The Nation*'s criticism of its "rescue" [editorial, "The System Saved," March 26] is marred. For example, "The provisions that hitch pensions to the rate of growth of wages make sense." In fact, that clause, which I believe will link pensions to the consumer price index or average wages, whichever is less, is a dead giveaway of the nature of this rescue.

Average wage increases have been lagging behind price hikes, and the sponsors of the Social Security bill hope that will continue; but they are taking no chances. Let's keep in mind that the average Social Security monthly check is about $400, and one third of the retired are said to have no other income. Further, bringing new government workers under Social Security is not "a step in the right direction," but a phasing out of the far more decent Federal pension system. The effect and the intent of the bill is to make Social Security so costly to workers, and so little rewarding, that it will lead to its ultimate repeal. Imagine, at a time of relentless unemployment, raising the retirement age!

*John L. Hess*

## UNDERMINING THE SYSTEM

*New York City*

"The System Saved" helps us understand what was not achieved in the "rescue" of Social Security and correctly warns us that Medicare is the target of the next attack.

The Social Security system was never in as grave shape as was portrayed in the Reagan onslaught. Most of the problems stem from the mismanagement of the economy, for which Social Security was made the whipping boy. The real motive of this rescue was to undermine younger workers' confidence in the system, and that was achieved.

Social Security, the crown of a reluctant welfare state, offends conservatives for several reasons: first, because it represents a right to benefits, a concept they abhor; second, because it emphasizes consumption rather than the transfer of resources to corporations and to the wealthy for investment; and finally, because it redistributes wealth from the better-off to the worse-off.

The attack on these principles will not be lessened; Representative Claude Pepper and his allies will need all the help we can give them to repel the next assault.

*Sumner M. Rosen*

## WITH THE POETS IN NICARAGUA

*New York City*

We are concerned about the Reagan Administration's drive to destabilize Nicaragua and to blame the Sandinist government for the ills of the region. We recognize with regret that an embattled government sometimes restricts certain rights, as have many governments—including that of the United States.

The mainstream news media have, in effect, chosen to ignore the continuing achievements of Nicaragua since the revolution. The most outstanding among these achievements are agrarian reform, the health program and the literacy campaign. In five months, illiteracy was reduced from 50 percent to 12 percent; a program of continuing education is being offered as a follow-up. In a country of poets, poetry workshops have sprouted in factories, police stations, army outposts and peasant organizations. Poems are published in a magazine called *Poesia Libre* and are "distributed like basic grains."

We writers are starting a drive to collect typewriters, ribbons, paper, office supplies and tape recorders. These will be used in the workshops and by writers all over Nicaragua.

Material may be contributed (and pick-up arrangements made) by calling (212) 924-0767. Donations for shipping costs and spare parts may be sent to The Committee to Support Nicaraguan Culture, 33 Carmine Street, New York, NY 10014.

*The Committee to Support Nicaraguan Culture (in formation)*
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*Henry Carlyle, Samuel Chavkin*
*Bell Chevigny, Ronald Christ*
*Sybil Claiborne, Lewis Cole*
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# EDITORIALS.

## Hussein Declines

The suspense surrounding King Hussein's response to President Reagan's Middle East peace plan was never a convincing bit of dramaturgy. Hussein had no overriding reasons for disrupting what the writer and scholar Fouad Ajami has called the "terrible stability" of the region. The peace process itself poses a threat to Hussein's hold, what with flaming passions expressed by all those on Jordan's borders and beyond. And if the plan was ever effected, Hussein would be faced with a tenuously "federated" Palestinian state whose interests could differ greatly from his own.

Moreover, the Reagan plan lacked the support necessary for its acceptance from all the other parties it would have affected. From the P.L.O., which is in internal disarray and whose moderates need much stronger guarantees of Israeli, Jordanian and American good intentions. From Israel, which seems determined to stay in Lebanon and to colonize and hold the West Bank as long as possible. And even from the United States, which has been unwilling—or unable—to back up its own plans for Middle East peace with the political force available to it. For example, President Reagan might have advanced his peace process many steps simply by demanding—instead of politely suggesting—that Israel withdraw from Lebanon and stop the breakneck settlement of the occupied territories, those areas where any future Palestinian "entity" would be located.

Both Prime Minister Begin and King Hussein seem to think that stability (the status quo is a more accurate term), however terrible it may be for some, is in their own nation's interest. The longer the peace process remains dead in its tracks, the more secure will be Israel's hold over its extended domain. But movement in the search for peace is crucial to the lives and futures of all the peoples of the Middle East, and although the Secretary of State has concentrated his public fire on the P.L.O. (with whom the Administration doesn't talk), it is up to Reagan to use his real influence with Israel to take the next necessary step.

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# Democrats Show Up

The six announced candidates for the Democratic Presidential nomination came to Springfield, Massachusetts, on April 8, looking for votes in a preference poll at the annual state party convention. But they seemed more like six characters in search of authority, or actors in search of a play. None has found a distinctive voice, an identifiable constituency or a differentiated vision for 1984. They plead, joke, harangue and whoop it up in fair representations of the political performance. But they have yet to determine the line of the plot.

Someone remarked that they all are playing parts made famous in earlier productions. Walter Mondale, the former Senator from Minnesota and Vice President of the United States, is playing Hubert Humphrey, whose credits are identical. John Glenn, the military hero turned civilian politician, is playing Dwight Eisenhower. Gary Hart, the manager of George McGovern's 1972 campaign, is playing his former boss. Alan Cranston has learned the lines once spoken by the Kennedy brothers, although he cannot manage the Kennedy look. Reubin Askew (Reubin who?) is playing the Jimmy Carter of 1975, the unknown but up-and-coming New South moralist. Ernest Hollings, who has not settled on a role model yet, did not show up in Springfield until the convention was nearly over, and in the meantime his wife, Peatsy, took to the stage like a trouper and played her husband—the Southern senatorial statesman from central casting. The show went on.

The six candidates squeezed themselves into the center of party policy—as much for mutual support as for prominence of place. In their brief minutes at the podium they all said they were for jobs, arms control with national security, a sparkling environment and compassion for the downtrodden. Cranston emphasizes arms control more than his fellows; Mondale focuses on employment; Hart features his trendy image as an antiwar veteran; Glenn hopes his NASA history will impress the industrial half of the military-industrial complex; and so on. But they want to appeal in equal measure to all the various Democratic constituencies—blacks, women, the young, the poor, union members, ethnics—without offending the corporate contributors and the centrist media that will fund and legitimize their efforts.

The dilemma they face in fashioning distinctive campaigns grows out of their uncertainty about the meaning of the coming election, a year and a half hence. There is a key to each Presidential election, and candidates who find it early in the season can use it to great advantage. The key to the 1960 election was the end of the postwar era. John Kennedy found a style to personify an America "moving again"; he also promoted an elaborate plan for economic expansion based on imperial outreach and government spending on domestic programs. The meaning of the 1964 election was peace, prosperity and social reform—the Great Society of Lyndon Johnson. In 1968 it was social control, a Vietnam solution and personal security—the Nixon platform. In 1972, McGovern *thought* the key was the integration of the post-1960s generation into the political mainstream; he was wrong, but only by four years. Carter picked up on that theme in 1976, and won with it. Reagan identified his key—the corporate urge for profits and the individual urge for identity—long before 1980, and fit it into the politics of greed, patriotism and social stability.

So far, the Democrats—at least those who campaigned in Springfield—sense that "jobs and peace" could be a winning slogan in 1984, but they are not sure. After all, Reagan could undercut those issues with an economic upswing and a little arms control agreement in his pocket by this time next year. But employment and a token arms agreement may not be what the next election means, after all. There are deeper upheavals still at work under the media-made issues that dominate the headlines. Reagan has only defused for the moment the great conflicts of race, class and social inequality that erupted two decades ago.

The uncertainty of the candidates was also reflected in the straw votes of the delegates. Just under 30 percent voted for Mondale—the front-runner all over the country, by all accounts. Second place went to no candidate at all but to "jobs"—the choice of the state labor lobby—which is part of a strategy to withhold support from anyone until the election is closer at hand. After that came Cranston, who waged an intense personal campaign with the delegates, and then Glenn and Hart; the last two were invisible at the bottom of the list. No one could say who had won. "The only verdict," a Boston pol remarked when the votes were announced, "is not guilty."

# Truth in Politics

Truth and democratic politics have little to do with each other, Hannah Arendt pointed out some years ago. But the current debate over the U.S.-sponsored invasion of Nicaragua shows something else as well: that in American politics the official lie is no longer meant to be believed. It is merely the pretext for a spectacle that is meant to convey a very different message of its own.

How else to account for the recent round of television appearances that Jeane Kirkpatrick has undertaken in order to pursue the Administration's psychological war on the Nicaraguan government? She seems to set up situations where she will be asked about American military support for the *contras*; with evident relish she can then reply with a provocative but diplomatically correct "no comment." "Actually, I hate not responding to questions *myself*," she told Robert MacNeil (on *The MacNeil-Lehrer Report*), as a faint smile played across her features. That was as far as MacNeil was able to get with her.

Ted Koppel did much better on ABC's *Nightline* a week later. Faced with Kirkpatrick's ambiguous denials and coy affirmations of American covert operations, Koppel pressed her into late-night overtime:

**KOPPEL:** Now, if it is possible to avoid ambiguity, could you just respond by saying—if you're saying we're not

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breaking the law, that these things are not happening? Could you deny that?

**KIRKPATRICK:** No, no, no. Not at all. What I will respond by saying, and very directly, without any ambiguity at all, is that the United States government is not engaged in an effort to overthrow the government of Nicaragua. There's nothing ambiguous about what I'm saying about that.

**KOPPEL:** Mrs. Kirkpatrick, then perhaps you would be good enough to draw that distinction for me. The U.S. government by inference, you seem to be saying, or by implication, you seem to be saying, is assisting the *contras*, but not to the end of overthrowing the government. Is that the distinction?

**KIRKPATRICK:** Mr. Koppel, you know that it's the policy of the U.S. government and its officials not to comment either affirmatively or negatively on that question. I am saying, however, that there is a significant distinction between assisting persons who might be harassing a government, in the effort to bring them to elections and negotiations in an effort to persuade them to cease making war on their neighbors, and an effort to overthrow the government. Those are different activities.

**KOPPEL:** All right. So, as I understand you, then, it is the distinction between overthrowing a government and convincing a government to have elections.

**KIRKPATRICK:** Or negotiations.

**KOPPEL:** So this is all part of encouraging the electoral process, then.

Koppel had begun to glimpse the truth. But minutes later, when he finished with Kirkpatrick and took up with Miguel d'Escoto, the Nicaraguan Foreign Minister, he turned away from it. Koppel ignored what he had just discovered about the subject of the night's broadcast, "Subversion in Nicaragua—What U.S. Role?"

"Mr. d'Escoto, you heard what Ambassador Kirkpatrick had to say," Koppel told the satellited image of the revolutionary. "The U.S. government denies that it is engaged in any efforts to overthrow your government, but it clearly would like to encourage your government to hold elections. And that doesn't seem like such a bad goal. Why don't you?"

D'Escoto saw what was happening. "Well, I don't think, really, that that is the issue tonight—whether or not we have elections. The issue is whether or not the United States is in fact engaging or waging a war against Nicaragua. Isn't that the issue?"

Not any longer for Koppel. Having drawn the truth from the American ambassador, he went on to bury it:

**D'ESCOTO:** And all we get from the United States is this very cynical type of response, saying, "Well, it is not in our tradition or in our custom to speak about covert actions against another country" and all this type of sick logic that we just heard.

**KOPPEL:** Well, in point of fact, Mrs. Kirkpatrick did not say any of that—at least this evening. She simply said that the U.S. government was not trying to overthrow your government, but that it was trying to encourage your government to hold elections.

Within a matter of ten minutes or so, Koppel denied what he had elicited. He did it simply by saying "simply said." He had greeted the distinction between overthrowing a government by force and encouraging elections by force with appropriate irony. But, in the face of d'Escoto's hostility to U.S. policy, he then reaffirmed its legitimacy. Once again, American journalism proved not quite so good at discovering the truth as it did at hiding it.

ROBERT KARL MANOFF

*Robert Karl Manoff, formerly the editor of the* Columbia Journalism Review, *is working on a study of press coverage of war and peace issues.*

# Phillip Burton

When Phillip Burton came to Congress in 1964 it was an institution steeped in the worst traditions of parochialism, incompetence and conservatism. It is hardly a perfect place today, but it has changed markedly in two decades, and an extraordinarily large amount of credit for its improvement goes to Burton, who died April 10, at the age of 56. Few leaders of his generation did more to make Congress a likely source of popular and democratic challenges to Presidential war making and militarism, to welfare retrenchment and to civil liberties restrictions.

Burton came as a rough-riding outsider and turned into a smooth-operating insider. He was one of only five representatives to vote against the Vietnam War in May 1965, and in 1968 he was one of two who opposed criminal penalties for protesters who burned an American flag. His identification with the progressive wing of the Democratic Party probably cost him votes in his failed bid for majority leader in 1976.

But he bored through the system to produce an impressive record of legislation: the Omnibus Parks Act of 1978, aid for aged and disabled citizens, compensation for black-lung victims, extension of food stamp eligibility to strikers.

Burton helped abolish the hated House Committee on Un-American Activities, and he worked to increase liberal Democratic influence in House committees and in the California delegation (he represented a San Francisco district). He enjoyed the infighting and the wheeling and dealing, but he used them for the best reasons, rather than for the love of the game. When he was canvassing his colleagues to see what land in their districts they wanted set aside for parks under his 1978 bill, Burton came up against a hostile Oklahoman from an oil-rich area.

"You've got nothing for me here," his antagonist told Burton. "The last thing I want is land taken out of production." To which Burton responded, "That's a promise—no parks in your district." He got the member's vote.

PHILIP BRENNER

*Philip Brenner is an associate professor in the School of International Service at American University and director of the Ph.D. program at the Institute for Policy Studies. He was a member of Representative Burton's staff in 1970.*

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# DISPATCHES.

## ■ IRAN: Tudeh's Turn

For the first time since the February 1979 revolution, members of the Tudeh (Communist) Party are behind bars in Teheran. Two months ago, thirty party members, including the secretary general, Nureddin Kianuri, and the treasurer, Taqi Keymanesh, were seized by the Ayatollah Khomeini's security forces. They were charged variously with treason and possession of false documents.

To many in the Iranian resistance, the "Ayatollah Kianuri," as he is derisively called by the non-Communist left, is only getting his just deserts. While virtually the entire Iranian left, from social democrats to armed guerrillas, broke with the Khomeini regime long ago, the Tudeh has made a point of collaborating with the mullahs. Kianuri has publicly called for the execution of members of the People's Mujahedeen and the extradition of its leaders who are living in exile in France. Tudeh Party members have reportedly aided the regime by pinpointing "safe houses" used by political opponents of the ruling clerics.

The reason for Khomeini's move against the Tudeh Party, which has at most 2,000 members, is not easily fathomable. But he seems to have given ear to a fiercely nationalistic faction in the group of young men and mullahs who surround him—the conservative, anti-Soviet, anti-U.S. Hojjatiye. This faction simply could not stomach an alliance between Khomeini and Soviet sympathizers like Kianuri.

An irony in the crackdown is the fact that among those arrested were several army officers who had been jailed by the Shah in 1953, after his coup overthrowing Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh. The officers languished in jail for twenty-five years until the Shah, seeking to placate the Khomeini-led opposition, released numerous political prisoners. Now they are back in familiar surroundings; only the name of the jailer has changed.

## ■ SWITZERLAND: Breaking the Bank Accounts

*For without money, George*
*A man is but a beast:*
*But bringing money, thou shalt be*
*Always my welcome guest.*

For fifty years Swiss bankers have lived by this little verse, welcoming persecuted and persecutors alike—so long as they bring money. The secrecy code was first adopted in the 1930s to prevent the German government from tracing the assets of Jews fleeing Nazi oppression; later, as the Reich crumbled, the code shielded the Nazis' booty.

Today, wealthy citizens of Third World countries are the major users of the Swiss stash. Breaking the currency laws of their own countries, these elites transfer billions of dollars to Zurich each year, worsening the capital shortages in their own and other less-developed countries. The magazine *New African* estimates the amount of money from Africa alone secreted in numbered accounts at about $300 billion. This practice has not gone uncriticized, particularly by church officials from the Third World. Three years ago, for example, when a Cameroonian priest named Jonas Dah visited Switzerland, he chided the gnomes of Zurich: "You talk of solidarity, but at the same time you help heads of state with your banking secrecy to hide away money which they have taken from the poor in their own countries. . . . what sort of solidarity is this?"

Now, partly as a result of such clerical pressure, there is a movement afoot in Switzerland to pry open the heretofore secret accounts, at least a little. A minority party, the Social Democrats, has gathered sufficient signatures to force a referendum in 1984 on a proposal that would close some of the loopholes that effectively keep accounts inviolate. Currently, a foreign government must have proof of criminal activity (under Swiss law, that is) before a bank can be made to release any information—even if that proof is the bank account itself. The proposed law would alter this Catch-22 by requiring bank disclosure when a criminal offense—as defined by the foreign government—is *suspected*.

Naturally, the proposed law has drawn fire from groups with a vested interest in the present system. The Swiss business and political establishments are vigorously opposed, as is most of the Swiss press. Critics warn that if Switzerland relaxes its secrecy code, the money will be deposited elsewhere, which would damage the country's economy. Moreover, they argue, it's not the governments of the developing countries that want to abolish secret banking; it's only a few "left-wing extremists."

The U.S. government must be included under that rubric, for the Swiss recently acceded to U.S. demands that the secrecy rules be relaxed when the money deposited in a Swiss account has been obtained through illegal insider trading in stocks. The Third World is still waiting.

## ■ JAPAN: The K.G.B. and the J.S.P.

"Japan is considered by the K.G.B. to be the easiest country in which to run active-measures operations." So said Soviet defector Stanislav Levchenko before a closed session of the House Select Committee on Intelligence last year. A major in the Soviet secret service, Levchenko worked in Japan for four years, ostensibly as a reporter for the Russian magazine *New Times*, then defected to the United States in 1979. During his debriefing, he claimed that the K.G.B. had recruited more than 200 Japanese agents, including a former member of the Cabinet of Ministers, "a close confidant of the owner of a major Japanese newspaper" and at least ten high-ranking members of Japan's main opposition party, the Japan Socialist Party (J.S.P.). The K.G.B. effectively controlled the J.S.P.'s political platform, he alleged.

Some may see in Levchenko's charges the earmarks of a C.I.A. disinformation scheme, designed to heighten anti-Soviet feeling in Japan and encourage the government to increase its defense budget. For one, he does not seem to make the distinction between active agents (those who were "run" by the K.G.B.) and unwitting assets (Japanese who may have talked to Levchenko out of sheer politeness). Yet the French government's recent expulsion of forty-seven Soviet diplomats

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KAI BIRD AND MAX HOLLAND

and journalists on suspicion of stealing technological secrets suggests that similar activities in Japan, which has more tempting targets, are not unlikely. Japanese political and social institutions have long been objects of superpower penetration and influence-peddling.

The United States has long sought to undermine the J.S.P. One tactic was to infiltrate the party's main base of support, and Japan's largest labor federation, the General Council of Trade Unions (Sohyo). As a State Department document we have obtained points out, in the postwar years the United States acted to strengthen Sohyo's much smaller conservative rival, the Japanese Confederation of Labor (Domei Kaigi). Having failed at that, Washington tried to bend Sohyo itself:

> From the mid-50s until 1961, we attempted to bolster the prestige and organizing efforts of the Domei Kaigi elements on a somewhat exclusive basis, with the hope that this grouping could be built to a point of overtaking Sohyo's hold over Japanese workers. . . .
>
> In 1961, we . . . sought to exploit opportunities to influence the Sohyo "mainstream" through "union diplomacy" . . . while, at the same time, reassuring the Domei Kaigi leaders that we weren't simply abandoning old friends to break bread with new ones. This caused much anguish in the Domei Kaigi group. . . .
>
> [They want to] be recognized as the only free-world aligned national labor center in Japan [and say] that Sohyo, despite any seeming evidence to the contrary, is essentially an enemy of the United States.

If, as a result of spy master Levchenko's allegations, Soviet machinations in Japan are exposed, perhaps the present Domei Kaigi leadership will reveal its involvement with the other superpower on the block. Fair's fair.

## ■ FOLLOW-UP: Hassan II

In last month's "Dispatches" we reported on a coup attempt in Morocco, a story that has been widely covered in Europe but ignored by the U.S. press. Now, information has come to light that the Central Intelligence Agency helped block the coup against King Hassan II.

The news about events inside the palace comes from one of the plotters, Lieut. Ahmed Rami, who was recently interviewed at a secret location in Sweden by *Africa Now*. According to Rami, in January the C.I.A. gave Hassan a dossier that contained, among other items, a videotape of a meeting in Europe between Rami and Gen. Ahmed Dlimi, Hassan's right-hand man. Since Rami, a leader of the army's covert Free Officer Movement, has been sentenced to death in Morocco for his involvement in a 1972 coup attempt, "that was enough for Dlimi to be eliminated," he said. About 11 P.M. on January 23, Dlimi was summoned to the palace and escorted to an underground room, Rami reported, where for several hours the King and two Americans interrogated him. At 5 A.M. Dlimi was shot; later a car accident was staged.

Rami explained that after Israel invaded Lebanon last summer, the Free Officers made plans to overthrow the monarchy in July of this year and declare a democratic Islamic Arab Republic of Morocco. The coup attempt would have followed a familiar pattern: after almost every Arab-Israeli war there has been at least one revolution against a corrupt Arab monarch. Aware of this pattern and cognizant of Hassan's vulnerability, the C.I.A. began tailing Dlimi. One unanswered question is whether Israel's intelligence agency, the Mossad—which has excellent relations with Hassan—was involved. In 1965, Israeli agents in France helped kidnap another Moroccan nationalist, Mehdi Ben Barka, who was later murdered.

## ■ SOUTH AFRICA: The Unneediest Case

Last November 3, the twenty-two executive directors of the International Monetary Fund engaged in a daylong discussion in Washington on the merits of a $1.1 billion loan to South Africa. The heated (by I.M.F. standards) debate, held behind the heavy wooden doors of its twelfth-floor board room, centered on two issues: whether South Africa needed the money and whether the policies it proposed were worthy of I.M.F. support. With U.S. executive director Richard Erb forcefully advocating South Africa's case, the loan narrowly carried the day. Pretoria won only 52 percent of the votes of the fund's contributors.

As it turns out, South Africa didn't need the money. The Washington-based Center for International Policy, which monitors the arcane activities of the fund, reports that last month, after receiving $862 million, South Africa asked the I.M.F. to halt further disbursements.

This development provides retroactive support for the arguments presented against the loan in November's close door session. According to confidential minutes leaked to the press, several executive directors representing Third World countries took a skeptical view of South Africa's purported need. Typical were the comments of Saudi Arabian executive director Yusuf Nimatallah, whose opposition was particularly significant because his country is a major contributor to the fund. He argued that South Africa's credit-worthiness and large reserves gave it "continued access to private capital markets," and charged that Pretoria was "taking advantage of the fund's cheaper resources."

In November, the I.M.F. accepted as economic gospel South Africa's claim that the average price of gold would not rise above $315 an ounce—although at the time the price was $425 an ounce. Since then it has averaged $450 an ounce, touching off a mild boom in the country's economy.

If South Africa's need was spurious, why did it come to the I.M.F. hat in hand? A possible answer can be found in an editorial that appeared last October 6 in *Beeld*, an Afrikaans daily. The money, *Beeld*'s editors crowed, is "a feather in our cap since granting of such a loan means our house is in order." While fund discussions are invariably couched in "technical" economic terms, the South Africans are aware that I.M.F. funding can be the West's seal of political acceptability.

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# UNCIVIL LIBERTIES.

CALVIN TRILLIN

For us, the saddest news of the spring holiday season was that our old friends the Levines decided to get a divorce, citing irreconcilable differences over what kind of Passover seder to attend. It seems only yesterday that we were all together at the Levines for a Freedom Seder—asking that all people oppressed by antidemocratic dictators be freed as the Jews were freed from Pharaoh's grasp, debating the issue of whether the Pharaoh's daughter was trying to co-opt Moses by hauling him out of the bulrushes, and tucking away some of Linda Levine's superb gefilte fish done with a simple béchamel sauce. But when Richie Levine and I had a drink together to talk about the split-up he reminded me that the Freedom Seder was almost twenty years ago. Since then, he told me, the Levines have observed Passover at dinners that included an Environmental Seder that emphasized the effect the parting of the Red Sea might have had on marine life and a seder done entirely in Reformation dress. It shows you how time flies.

When we had our drink, Richie was in a reflective mood, talking about the seders he used to go to as a kid in Detroit at the home of his Uncle Mo the Gonif. Richie happened to have two uncles named Mo—one of them a failed actor who lived off his relatives, the other a prosperous businessman who had once been accused of embezzlement by his partner—and to keep them straight, the family called them Uncle Mo the Schnorrer and Uncle Mo the Gonif.

"Those were the days," Richie said. "My sisters and I would get a little tipsy on the Passover wine and kid Aunt Sarah about the matzoh balls being kind of rubbery: 'I'll just save this one, thanks, Aunt Sarah; we're going to play jacks a little later, and it'll make a good ball.'"

"Simpler times, Richie," I said. "Those were simpler times."

It was an acquaintance of ours we call Harold the Committed who organized the Freedom Seder at the Levines, but Richie didn't seem to blame him for anything that followed. "Hal the C's O.K.," Richie said. "Sure, I got a little bored when he went into that long spiel comparing Moses' brother Aaron to Ché Guevara, but I figured it wasn't much different from when I got restless waiting for Uncle Mo the Gonif to stumble through all that Hebrew so that I could have another go at the Manischewitz burgundy. Times change."

I nodded, and looked into my drink for a while. "So what went wrong, then?" I finally said.

"Well, nothing right away," Richie said. "Harold the Committed wasn't in town for Passover for a few years there; that's when he was going to Sweden every spring to do that ecumenical Unilateral Disarmament Seder with the schismatic Lutheran peaceniks. Josh and Jenny weren't old enough then to know what was going on, so I guess we just skipped Passover for quite a while, except for that Interfaith Seder at the Mohlers' where we saw you—the one where the priest got blotto and the Methodist minister fainted into the chopped liver."

I remembered the occasion well. The priest polished off the Passover wine supply so quickly that the last two blessings had to be said over apple juice. The Methodist minister started in on the chopped liver with considerable gusto—having had up to that moment no way at all of knowing that he carried in his bloodstream antibodies that would set off a violent chemical reaction to schmaltz.

Apparently, when the kids got old enough to understand what Passover was—Josh was about 6 and Jenny 4—Richie assumed there would simply be a regular family seder every year, but Linda, who had always been intense about causes, was convinced that a seder had to be a statement. After she lost interest in national liberation and gourmet cooking, the Levines went to the Environmental Seder, which Richie remembered as having been "mostly about micro-organisms." That flowed into a Natural Foods Seder, whose symbolism irritated Richie. "I mean, let's face it," he told me. "The mortar that the Jews made in Egypt didn't look anything like mung beans, and it's silly to pretend it did."

"So that's what did it?" I asked. "The mung beans for mortar?"

"Oh, no," Richie said. "That was years ago. After that—let me see—we had a seder at a radical feminist collective, where they refused to recognize the killing of the Egyptians' firstborn sons as a curse, which made Josh feel a little uncomfortable of course."

"So you said you wouldn't go back there the next year?"

"No, no. The next year we went to a seder where the guest of honor was an Indian holy man Linda's pals were very big on at the time. He went on and on about whether plain matzoh had inner peace. Finally, I told him I'd promise to stay away from his ashram if he'd stay away from my seders—sort of a reverse interfaith arrangement."

"So that did it?"

"No. What did it is when Linda got involved in finding her roots, and we started going to seders every year in Brooklyn with Hasidim who pray in Hebrew for six or eight hours before you can have a bite of gefilte fish. I have a lot of respect for those people, but they're not the sort of crowd that goes for matzoh-ball jokes. So this year, I told Linda that if we're searching so hard for roots, my roots are in Detroit: I was going to seder at Uncle Mo the Gonif's. So she said go. It was great. Uncle Mo the Gonif and Aunt Sarah are getting on, but one of my sisters helped with the cooking, and she even knows how to make those bouncy matzoh balls. Uncle Mo the Gonif's Hebrew hasn't improved. He's really a very sweet man, my Uncle Mo the Gonif—as long as you don't leave him alone with the books."

"I hope there's no acrimony between you and Linda," I said.

"It's a very amicable separation," Richie said. "The only problem we're having is who gets custody of the kids on Passover."

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# ARTICLES.

## Cold War Liberalism

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

alism, hounds the National and World Councils of Churches for allegedly supporting Marxism, revolution and lesser heresies, with a ferocity its correspondents usually reserve for corrupt politicians and quacks. *The New York Times* baits the Old Left, the New Left and lefts yet unborn for a variety of political sins and ideological errors; see, to give a few examples, recent harangues on the plot to defame Jerzy Kosinski, the slander of U.S. diplomats in Chile by the film *Missing*, the dolorous effects of the Vietnam War protests on foreign policy, the moral complexity of McCarthy-era anti-Communist investigations.

*The Washington Post*'s editorial page is suddenly strident in its attacks on certain leftist organizations within the nuclear freeze and disarmament movement. *The New Republic* lets hardly a week go by without detecting the rebirth (or the persistence) of Stalinism in all the old familiar places on the left. Similar seizures occur with increasing frequency in the editorial chambers of *Harper's*, *Newsweek*, even *The New York Review of Books*, and at the major television networks.

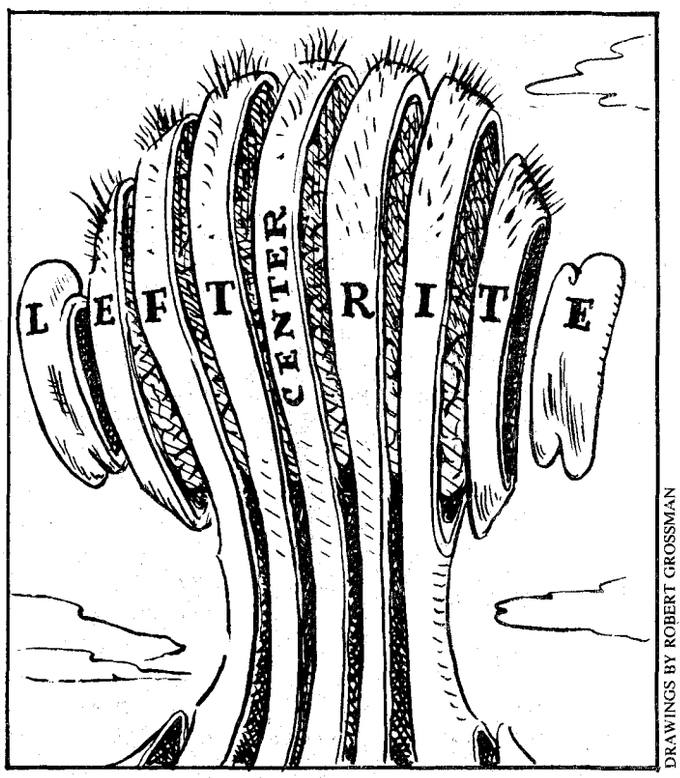
There are more examples every day, but the new cold war liberalism goes far beyond a simple series of journalistic attacks on leftist positions in a few *causes célèbres*. It is a wide, deep and diffuse campaign against the left itself, a contest to define history, to capture political icons, terms and totems. It is a battle for legitimacy, waged by leading lights of liberalism against those on their political and cultural left flank. It is the first wave of an advancing cold war culture, propelled by the neoconservative and New Right tides of the recent past, which will touch all that we think and do in the period ahead.

It is Susan Sontag, in a speech at a Solidarity rally at Town Hall in New York City in February 1982, accusing many of her former comrades (including those here at *The Nation*) of countenancing Communist authoritarianism and aggression. It is Irving Howe, in his recently published book, *A Margin of Hope, An Intellectual Autobiography*, berating the New Left of the 1960s for its immature tolerance of Stalinism. It is David Horowitz and Peter Collier, in *Rolling Stone*, trashing the Students for a Democratic Society and the Weather Underground as orgies of sex and violence, without regard or sympathy for the radical movement's historical context or political analysis. It is Timothy Garton Ash, in *Harper's*, comparing the antinuclear Green Party to the Nazis because of its idealism. It is the *CBS Evening News* insinuating that President Mitterrand's compact with the Communist Party has brought a wave of terrorism to France. It is the uncritical broadcasting of rumors about K.G.B. plots, Libyan hit squads, Bulgarian conspiracies. It comes from Flora Lewis, Ronald Radosh, David Denby, the brothers Kalb, Morley Safer: liberals all, to some degree, writing and speaking in ideological phrases and accusatory tones not heard in this country since the end of the 1950s.

Anyone with an eye and an ear for the nuances of a new sensibility should be able to detect the telltale signs of the new cold war culture. Political discourse has shifted rightward; whole topics are excluded; fundamental arguments—about revolution, for example—have been dropped from conversation. There is an inordinate amount of talk these days about national security, military strategy, subversion and terrorism. The Soviet Union, after a period of relatively benign treatment in the press as well as in political conversations, is again a pariah state. Throughout, discussions of public issues have an ideological spin, and criticisms are hurled with a prosecutorial power that is strongly suggestive of the 1950s. Politics *feels* different.

The new cold war liberals are not to be confused with the New Right or the neoconservatives, who are illiberal across the board—on social welfare, civil liberties, racial and sexual equality, the environment and cultural styles. The cold war liberals are still left of center on most of these issues most of the time. CBS is committed to "soup-line journalism" and devotes precious air time to the downside of Reaganomics. *The New Republic* is staunchly civil libertarian. *The New York Times* is for clean air and pure water, even at corporate expense. *The Washington Post* speaks out strongly for civil rights.

What unites these still-liberal voices is a concern with loyalty, subversion and national security reminiscent of that displayed by the old cold war liberals of the 1950s.




DRAWINGS BY ROBERT GROSSMAN

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The issues are defined with more sophistication than they were three decades ago, but the objectives are basically the same.

### The Loyalty Perplex

Take the matter of loyalty. In the 1950s, the working definition was simple: allegiance to the United States and not to the Soviet Union. The cold war liberals justified the expulsion of Communists and fellow travelers from American institutional life—from labor unions, veterans' groups, political parties, civil liberties organizations, universities, the media, the entertainment industry and, of course, government at every level—on the ground that the leftists were "under the discipline" of a foreign, hostile power. Communism had to be outlawed, and it was Hubert Humphrey, the compleat cold war liberal politician, who sponsored the necessary legislation, in 1954. C.P. membership was considered prima facie proof of disloyalty, and non-card-carrying fellow travelers had only to be shown to be adherents of the "party line" to be outlawed as well. An enormous effort went into the drawing of lines between "disloyal" leftists and "loyal" liberals. Constitutional rights were guaranteed only to those who were loyal to the Constitution, Q.E.D.

The loyalty issue in the 1980s is more ambiguous than it was in the 1950s because the limits of the left are not coterminous with the membership of the Communist Party (or *any* radical party), or even with an identifiable conspiracy of Communists-cum-fellow travelers who slavishly follow Moscow's orders. (To be sure, there is a small—almost minuscule—group of "official" Communist Party members who are once again feeling the sting of liberal swords, after a spell of laissez-faire tolerance or even camaraderie shown by liberals in the coalitions of the 1960s and 1970s.) The new loyalty battle is being fought largely in a single arena—the nuclear freeze and disarmament movement. Some of its liberal sympathizers call for the expulsion of Communists and their fellow travelers, "stooges" and "dupes" from the movement.

Sometimes the attacks are made with disarming sincerity, as when *The Washington Post* charged (in an editorial written by Stephen Rosenfeld) that the international peace circuit is riddled with "creatures of the K.G.B." Such statements are customarily accompanied by the sharp, screeching sounds of lines being drawn on slate, demarcating the bad guys on the left and the good ones from the center rightward.

Some of the critics, however, are less ingenuous. These sophisticates (who often have personal histories of radical activism in the 1960s) claim that the Communists, by dint of their single-minded dedication and demonic energy, will "take over" peace coalitions and "subvert" them to their own ends, thus weakening the potential for mass mobilization. For example, Ronald Radosh reported in *The New Republic* that a Communist member of the executive committee of the June 12 Rally Committee wanted last year's profreeze demonstration in New York City to endorse "such demands as a call for an end to U.S. intervention in Central America." That and similar appeals to "mushy logic," he warned, would drive out clear-thinking types who might otherwise demonstrate against nuclear war.

Here is a classic case of the "mush shift," a deft maneuver practiced by the old cold war liberals. The purpose, then and now, is to deflect the right-wing accusations of being muddle-headed and tender-minded onto the far left. It was practiced in antiquity by Arthur Schlesinger, who drew the line between the tender and the tough in his 1949 book, *The Vital Center*, the bible of cold war liberal thought.

The maneuver was part of the larger process of blame-shifting that became the liberals' standard technique of cold war survival. Of course, they insisted that their motives were moral rather than self-interested, patriotic rather than protective. They saw the evil of Communism and the perfidy of Communists, they said, and it was their duty to condemn wrong thinking and wrong doing. But while their intentions may indeed have been high-minded, their actions subverted their motives. What they did was destroy the left while hardly denting international Communism (that fight was carried on by the generals of capitalism, not their liberal lieutenants). Cold war liberalism's pre-eminent preoccupation—and its primary target—was the American left, and it succeeded mightily in its destructive work.

### Thunder on the Right

Why has that preoccupation returned, like a long-buried fear-fantasy in the still of the night? Why are the new cold war liberals so concerned with loyalty, legitimacy and limpness of mind? It cannot be that a handful of American Communists pose a clear and present danger to Reagan's republic by their putative disloyalty, even if all the dupes, stooges and fellow travelers are lumped with them. Nor does their presence in the peace movement seem to be having any deleterious effect on its organizing efforts, or on its success in recruiting Middle Americans, from Vermont town meetings to the U.S. Congress. In fact, the cold war liberals are more worried about pressure from the right than any danger to the disarmament movement from the left. The calumny originates with President Reagan: The peace movement is "inspired by not the sincere, honest people who want peace, but by some who want the weakening of America and so are manipulating honest people and sincere people." From Senator Jeremiah Denton: Four groups advising Peace Links, the women's organization sponsoring National Peace Day, "are either Soviet controlled or openly sympathetic with, and advocates for, Communist foreign policy objectives." From *Reader's Digest*: The "patriotic, sensible people who make up the peace movement have been penetrated, manipulated and distorted to an amazing degree by people who have but one aim—to promote Communist tyranny by weakening the United States."

And how do the new cold war liberals respond? By blame-shifting, just like in the old days—calling the dogs off themselves by sicking them on the left. To be sure, critics like Radosh are careful to make a distinction between "Red-baiting and anti-Communism," but it is all in the eye of the attacker—a distinction without a difference. The objective

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effect of such attacks, whatever the claimed motive, is to undermine the left, to destroy both radical consciousness and radical activity as legitimate parts of political life.

Loyalty as an issue is now more complex. The left of the 1930s, which became the "generation on trial" of the 1950s, had an alien cast—in origin or allegiance—whereas the contemporary left has an all-American look. It was spawned on native soil, largely derived from the New Left of the 1960s, nurtured in the civil rights and antiwar campaigns and multiplied by the myriad movements of the succeeding years. It is hardly alien, and attempts to brand it disloyal require more elegant arguments than those used before.

Irving Howe, perhaps the greatest living arbiter of acceptable and unacceptable styles of leftism, unveiled some of the arguments against the New Left in a landmark article, "The Decade That Failed," which was published in *The New York Times Magazine* last September. In this excerpt from *A Margin of Hope*, he looked back in sorrow for the movement and in anger at those who did the damage: the "self-styled revolutionists," the "rigid" authoritarians, the white Marxist-Leninists, the black "Mau Maus," the naïve utopians, the student Stalinists—all the familiar terms in the arsenal of charges that liberals now use against the New Left.

Describing a decade as "failed," as Howe does the 1960s, is rather like calling a generation "lost." It is an expression of one's own disappointment and despair rather than a description of historical reality. Certainly there are arguments enough for those who would maintain that the social and political upheavals of the 1960s had enormously positive as well as negative consequences, even measured against the rigorous standards of a social democrat like Howe. But the inquests on the 1960s performed by Howe, by David Horowitz and Peter Collier and by others who have taken to baiting the New Left radicals are not primarily efforts to understand history; they are attempts to write it in their own terms, for their own ends.

**Recapturing Vietnam**

The decade of the 1960s is a cultural artifact up for grabs—just as other decades were on the block when the earlier cold war liberals began grading their own loyalty tests. The far right of the McCarthy period thought the 1930s a season of treason perpetrated by Communists and New Dealers; the old cold war liberals then made their favorite distinction: the decade had failed because of the Reds, and the loyal New Dealers were not to blame. The new cold war liberals make an analogous distinction: the 1960s failed because of the aforementioned intellectual crimes and political treasons of the radicals, but the true "democrats" should be spared in the general disgrace.*

The battle to define the history of the 1960s is nowhere more noisy than in the contest for the hearts and minds of scholars and students of the Vietnam War. A fight has been brewing for some time, but it burst into public debate and into print just this year, at the Vietnam Reconsidered conference at the University of Southern California [see "Coming Home," *The Nation*, February 19], and in an exhaustive cover article in *The New York Times Magazine*, "The New Vietnam Scholarship," by that paper's former Saigon correspondent Fox Butterfield. The antecedent of the contest was the right wing's indiscriminate assault on the whole antiwar movement, from the quagmire theorists who believed that the war was simply not winnable to the anti-imperialists who hoped the Vietcong revolutionaries would, in the words of one Vietnam veteran who spoke at the U.S.C. conference, "kick the U.S. in the ass." In response to the right, the liberal "revisionists" have declared the antiwar movement another failure of the left because it enabled Communists to win in Indochina (with the usual blood baths and re-education camps) and because it weakened the power of the United States to work its good will elsewhere in the world. To give native color to the argument, *The New York Review of Books* published a rather bizarre complaint from the first major defector from the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam—the broad revolutionary organization that fought the Americans and their Saigon clients. Truong Nhu Tang said that the N.L.F. had all along wanted the United States to leave behind a neutralist, liberal Vietnam, but that the Tet offensive and the American antiwar movement had delivered his country over to the Communists. Tang now lives in Paris.

Naturally, the liberals absolve themselves from blame for events after the war in Vietnam; it was the fault of the other guys—the radicals who tripped to Hanoi, who waved N.L.F. banners at antiwar rallies, who expressed solidarity with the "enemy." That is, the ones who were disloyal to flag and country.

What's wrong with the liberal blame-shifting in this case is that it revises history in such a way as to make it fantastic. The antiwar movement had only one objective: the disengagement of the United States from Indochina. There was no disagreement between liberals and radicals (or anyone else in the movement) on that score. It was a movement in America, not in Vietnam; its targets were the policy makers in Washington, not in Hanoi. It did not demand of Presidents Johnson and Nixon that the United States disengage itself from the war only if social democracy were installed in Saigon; it was for the reign of peace, not for the establishment of a parliament in Vietnam or the victory of the Communist Party. The sympathies, the rhetoric and even the behavior of many radicals may have been tasteless or provocative, but that was irrelevant to the shape of the peace. Nor could the radicals conceivably have delayed the ultimate American withdrawal or damaged the antiwar movement;

* There seems to be a contest for the definition of the struggles of every decade. The fight for the 1940s was over two issues: the historical meaning of World War II and the politics of the origins of the cold war. Radicals saw the war primarily as a resistance to fascism which turned into a vehicle for the expansion of the American empire. They perceived the cold war as an extension of the American imperial drive, now waged against its only serious opponent, the Soviet Union.

The fight for the history of the 1950s was over the issue of McCarthyism and the role of the various actors in that episode. Cold war liberalism is the ideological name for the middle position in that contest. The McCarthyites saw the 1950s as a time when Russia was preparing to subvert America and take over the world; the enemy was stopped by vigilant military and investigative measures. The left saw the time as a period of assault on both civil liberties and the radical presence in the United States. The cold war liberals agreed that McCarthyism was a menace, but they insisted that an antileft campaign was necessary. However, their anti-Communism merged with Red-baiting to a point of indistinguishability.

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the radicals *made* the movement. Insofar as American policy was shaped by domestic pressures (rather than by the situation in Vietnam), the disruption of the social fabric on the home front was certainly critical to stopping the war.

There is another struggle taking place over the right to define current history. The new cold war liberals have seized on the revolt of the Polish workers, for example, and entered it in the books as another failure of the American left. Susan Sontag sounded the theme of this effort in her Town Hall speech [see "Communism and the Left," *The Nation*, February 27, 1982], in which she warned leftists against ignoring the Solidarity movement because of the same sentimental attachment to Communism that had led them astray in the 1950s. They could have learned "the truth" about Communism, she said, by reading *Reader's Digest*. Movie critic David Denby made a similar charge in the course of a roundhouse swing at *Village Voice* columnist Alexander Cockburn in an article in *The New Republic*. Denby observed that while Cockburn could get worked up about the plight of the Palestinians, he had hardly a word to say about the tragedy of the Polish workers.

One could debate the truth of this accusation (actually, Cockburn had written in defense of Solidarity), but such specifics were secondary to Denby's main purpose, which was to blame the American left for betraying the Polish workers' movement and thus contributing to its failure. Liberals love failure because they can blame it on the left.

### The Subversion-Terrorism Equation

Subversion as an issue in the culture of the new cold war liberalism has surfaced in somewhat the same way as loyalty: in response to repeated rumblings on the right. And like the loyalty issue, subversion has an antiquated as well as a contemporary aspect.

The subversion problem in the 1950s was stated to be that Russian spies, or spies for the Russians, were stealing secrets (the Rosenbergs), manipulating policy (Alger Hiss in the State Department) and brainwashing the masses (the Hollywood Ten). Subversion was the objective act; it was produced by disloyalty, the subjective state. The great subversion trials of the cold war era were meant to provide proof that disloyalty had a perilous predicate. When cold war liberals bore witness against leftists before Congressional committees, or when they enforced blacklists, or when they voted to outlaw Communism, they tacitly (or loudly) accepted the theory, enshrined in the Smith Act of 1940, that American Communists posed a danger to America.

In time, and with the cold war thaw, the operative sections of the Smith Act were declared unconstitutional, after which espionage, when it was discovered, was treated as a criminal act, not an ideological statement. Now, as the new cold war settles in, there is a revival of interest in the old spy stories. Two books about the Rosenbergs are due this year (the thirtieth anniversary of their execution), Alger Hiss's case is flaring up again in the courts and the British cold war spies are forever popping up in one connection or another. Michael Straight comes out in his book, *After Long Silence*. Donald Mclean and Anthony Blunt die, and the obituary writers celebrate their contributions to Soviet espionage. It all serves to create a credible context for cold warriors: what happened once could happen again.

But subversion has a different face in the 1980s. Just as the right is more worried about the disloyalty of native New Leftists, so it is fearful of a new kind of home-grown subversion: the name is terrorism. The right is apt to lump everyone it doesn't like into one terrorist group, so it has fallen to the cold war liberals, again, to take cover and direct the fire to their left. The far right, for instance, figures that mainline Protestant churches in the United States and abroad are fomenting revolution on every continent. *60 Minutes*, however, does a two-part special [see Cynthia Brown, "The Right's Religious Red Alert," *The Nation*, March 12] on the peculiar perfidy of the leadership of the National and World Councils of Churches (as opposed to the loyal, conservative membership) and their grants to such groups as the North American Committee on Latin America and the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador. Various shots of "leftist" church people are intercut with shots of Fidel Castro, unidentified marching Asians and unnamed black Africans carrying (according to correspondent Morley Safer) revolutionary rifles.

It is not a very great leap from there to the conclusion that those who support revolution in the Third World are soft on terrorism, or worse. Since we know, or have been told by Alexander Haig, Jeane Kirkpatrick and President Reagan, that terrorism is international, that the Palestinians who kill innocent people in Jerusalem are allied with the Black Liberation Army and Weather Underground guerrillas who kill bank guards in Nyack, New York, it must follow that anyone who holds to the politics of insurrection is a potential terrorist.

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There is a perdurable debate within the left, and between liberals and leftists, over both the morality and the efficacy of nonviolence, revolution, guerrilla warfare and even standard-brand terrorism. The debate has cropped up in hundreds of political upheavals, from the French Resistance and the Warsaw uprising in World War II, through the anti-colonial wars in Asia and Africa, to Cuba and Nicaragua, and to the black liberation movement in the United States. But the kind of treatment *60 Minutes* gave to the subject was quite different from the old debate: it was a prosecutorial campaign. "Terrorism" as a term thus becomes an ideological weapon, like "Marxism" (which Safer also hurled at the church leaders) or "Stalinism." The words are not meant to have descriptive value, only firepower.

**Return of the Red Menace**

Like loyalty and subversion, national security has made an unexpected comeback on the list of liberal concerns. After the fearful 1950s, it seemed that the question of American military security was dead and buried; its last gasp came during the Kennedy Administration, with its apocalyptic vision of a missile gap, the Cuban missile scare and the Berlin crisis. J.F.K.'s "Ich bin ein Berliner" were famous last words of the old cold war. After that came a period of concentration on internal social problems (poverty, racism), the war in Vietnam, détente and Watergate. And *voilà*! The missiles are bristling once again, the bomb looms large and militarism is in command.

After the setback in Vietnam, the New Right and the neoconservatives set out to kill détente and restore American military supremacy. Their method was to raise the specter of the "Soviet threat," that is, the Red menace in Russian uniform. But their strategy could never have succeeded without the participation of liberals in a revived cold war discourse.

The liberal reaction to pressure from the right worked on two levels. The ideological groundwork was laid by placing communism—as an ideology—outside lawful limits of thought. "Communism *is* fascism," Sontag said at Town Hall. If that is true, then communism in any national accent—Russian, Cuban, Ethiopian, Nicaraguan—is dangerous, and must be destroyed before it destroys us. (Communism in countries that happen to be soft on America can be redefined as something else, such as Yugoslav "Titoism," or Chinese "revisionism," and need only be patronized, rather than liquidated.) Marxism—when it wears a guerrilla uniform or a kaffiyeh—is simply communism waiting to shoot its way into a government. The cold war liberals can thus condemn Salvadoran rebels and Palestinian fighters with the same fervor they display toward Soviet soldiers.

On the second level, the new cold war liberals offered a political platter of fine distinctions and sophistries about the arms race and the nuclear freeze and disarmament movement. These were most cogently stated by Leon Wieseltier, in his exhaustive rumination in the January 10 & 17 issue of *The New Republic*, entitled "Nuclear War, Nuclear Peace." Wieseltier's very comprehensiveness defeats analysis, let alone characterization; but it is fair to say that after demonstrating that both the "hawks" and the "doves" are neither all wrong nor all right, he concludes that there is indeed a Soviet military threat and that nuclear deterrence is the only possible political and moral method for meeting it.

This is an important conclusion for cold war liberals, similar in significance to the decision of their predecessors thirty years ago to stand behind, or under, Dullesian "massive retaliation," and to sanction containment, brinkmanship and the various permutations of confrontational policy in that era. And while Wieseltier and like-minded theorists begin by responding to the fears of the right about Russian domination, they end up by attacking the left—the freeze movement, the disarmament prophets (Jonathan Schell and E.P. Thompson) and the naïve, sentimental, tender-minded troops in the ranks.

**A Cold War Is Reborn**

Culture, like history, is dialectical; it develops in response to the interplay of political and intellectual forces on a scale of time in the real world. Cultural developments do not appear out of nowhere, or float free of the basic relationships of power and privilege that they reflect. The culture of the new cold war has a history and a reason which are related to its times. And it has a future which can be presumed, though not precisely predicted.

In its current phase, the cold war began, or resumed, at the moment détente was declared—whichever date one may care to name: when President Nixon announced his mission to Moscow in 1971, when he signed the SALT I arms treaty in May 1972, when Congress authorized its approval in September. In any case, six months later, the Coalition for a Democratic Majority—soon to be renamed the Committee on the Present Danger—was in business, plotting a campaign to restore the *status quo ante* détente.

The coalition was composed of Vietnam hawks from the Johnson wing of the Democratic Party, who had lost power to the McGovern wing in the wake of the war. Later, the committee was broadened to include Republicans, former New Dealers and freelance anti-Communists who agreed with the group's manifesto calling for aggressive opposition to the "Soviet drive for dominance based upon an unparalleled military buildup."

What started as a letterhead listing Democrats on the outs gained the support of those disaffected from détente: Jewish neoconservatives worried about Israel's security in a depolarized world, corporate politicians concerned about the safety of petroleum supplies, old cold warriors who refused to die or fade away and ambitious young men seeking a hook for their hopes for power in government, the universities or one or another social or intellectual set. Match these names with any of those categories: Norman Podhoretz, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Henry Jackson, George Will, Paul Nitze, Eugene Rostow, Daniel Moynihan, Leon Keyserling.

In the mid-1970s, the infant cold war campaign was run for the most part by neoconservatives; it flourished in the world of the formerly liberal. There were historical reasons

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for that, particularly the long memories from the 1950s. But there were practical reasons as well. The neoconservatives were closest to power, and they used the cold war threat as a means to consolidate their position. It had, after all, worked before.

There was another source of heat on the issue of Communism and national defense. The old right had been utterly out of power, office and fashion since the McCarthy days. In the post-Vietnam political trough the New Right—McCarthyism rehabilitated—was making its bid. Eventually, these far rightists would merge into the Reagan campaign (and Administration). In the late 1970s, they were still outside the political mainstream, firing away at the liberals and the left with indiscriminate enthusiasm, while the neoconservatives—a more tasteful, pin-striped bunch—were more precise in their aim.

Their target was the tender-minded liberalism of the Vietnam period, now embodied in the McGovern wing of the Democratic Party and in what journalists called the "left" of the Carter Administration. They were particularly hostile to Carter's disarmament chief, Paul Warnke, to U.N. representative Andrew Young and to Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. Their principal policy demand was the scrapping of the SALT II treaty; their main military objective was the authorization of the MX missile.

The jousting that had gone on between 1974 and 1978 was a preliminary to the main event: Carter's capitulation to the new cold warriors halfway through his term. It was at that point that cold war liberalism was born, a brand-new political baby, the product of—but distinct from—a set of neoconservative and right-wing forebears.

## Carter Moves Right

If there is one episode that can be identified as the historical fulcrum between détente and the new cold war, it was the small tempest over the existence—never proved—of a "Soviet combat brigade" in Cuba, which Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman Frank Church announced had been detected in the summer of 1979. Over the determined opposition of Vance, who actually offered to resign because of the specious charges (which were endorsed by national security adviser Brzezinski), Carter grossly exaggerated this Soviet "threat" in order to co-opt his right-wing critics and to move to the patriotic high ground from the slough of post-1960s defeatism.

Then in November came the Iranian hostage affair, followed by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December. Warnke, Young and Vance fled into the descending night. Carter reinstituted draft registration; he imposed sanctions on trade and "technology transfers" and stopped grain sales to the Russians; he opted for the MX and its absurd subterranean shell-game siting plan; he pulled America out of the Olympics; and he scrapped SALT II. Détente was dead.

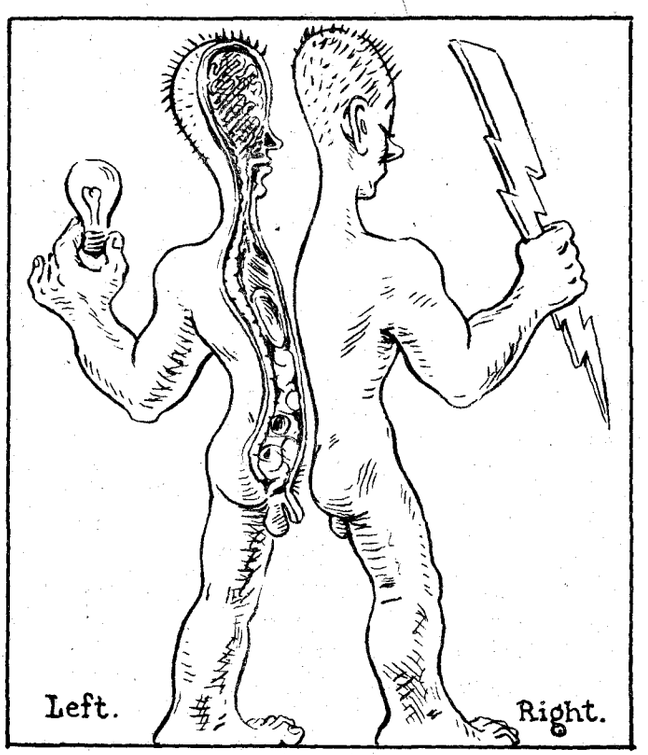
As much as anything, Carter's surrender to the New Right and the neoconservatives on defense and national security issues deprived his Administration of an independent foreign policy that liberals could support. It may well have led to his defeat in 1980. For the liberal members of the Vietnam generation, whom Carter had courted and who had helped provide his small margin of victory four years earlier, were demoralized and disillusioned—and bored, to boot. Carter had given the left a declaration of amnesty for Vietnam-era draft resisters and deserters. He had tried to curb the most rapacious imperial instincts of American policy in Africa and Latin America. He had gone all gooey for human rights. But then he changed tack, and his Administration offered the left only an echo of a right-wing foreign policy, not a meaningful choice.

Thus, the new cold war liberalism is a consequence of pressure from both neoconservatives and the New Right, the changelings and the hard core. This dynamic is very much like the one that produced the cold war liberalism of the 1950s, which was a response to the Republican far right and the new conservatives who became ensconced in the last years of the Roosevelt regime. They had engineered the dumping of Henry Wallace in 1944, and had advised Truman to assume his cold war positions in the early postwar period.

## The Great Recantation

But there was another dynamic at work in the return of cold war liberalism, which had its origins in the personal history of a generation, the evolution of its ideas and the development of its consciousness.

History, Hegel said, is the problem of consciousness. The generation of the 1960s cut its consciousness on a liberationist, activist, sometimes utopian vision of the world. Only a few members of the 1960s cohort actually acted out that vision in a purposeful, dedicated way. The great majority watched, sympathized or dabbled with the passing radical causes and countercultural styles: civil rights, anti-

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war protest, Third World revolution, sexual liberation, communalism, high times, working-class militancy.

Their sympathies were based, for the most part, on sentiment rather than ideology. They felt a shiver of excitement when civil rights organizers raised their fists for "black power," even though the slogan—and the politics behind it—contradicted the ideal of integration, which they affirmed when challenged. Many secretly approved of the most violent expressions of social protest and personal rage, even if they stated their opposition to violence as a matter of policy. I remember lunching in Washington with a leading black official in the Johnson Administration during the bloody Detroit riots of 1967. His job was to keep the lid on racial conflict, to defuse tensions and maintain social peace. But he told me that he and his wife watched the news every night and cheered, "Burn, baby, burn!" as Detroit went up in flames. There were other cheers for the Vietnamese Communists' victory of Tet, for various Weather Underground exploits, for blows against the American empire struck throughout the world.

Many of the cheering liberals on the broad fringes of the radical issues never stopped to think that what was happening in the movement and in the streets would be inimical to their own class and career interests. For example, the defeat of the United States in Vietnam and the victory of the Vietnamese Communists would over the long run jeopardize the liberals' privileged position in the center of imperial society. And the growing counterculture of alienated, adventurous, dropout and potentially explosive youths would later subvert the liberals' image as responsible members of the mainstream.

The followers of the radical political and social movements of the 1960s joined in celebrating the great moments of the period without worrying much about the inevitable problems down the road. They reveled in the sit-ins and the freedom marches, the campus strikes and the smoke-ins, the cane-cutting expeditions to Cuba and the encounters with the Vietcong in Canada and Czechoslovakia. Now, however, they feel guilty about—or have been made to take the blame for—a rigid Communist regime in Vietnam, murderous black cults like the Symbionese Liberation Army, the desperate junkie society that replaced the pot-and-flowers communes.

When the right wing—both the neoconservatives and the New Right—began its attack on the politics and lifestyles of the 1960s, many members of the vast liberal fringe, now grown-up and settling into conventional jobs and marriages, realized they had to fight for their own legitimacy. Their loyalty, broadly defined, was questioned in the context of a new cold war which was revived for that very purpose—to delegitimize the radical consciousness of a generation. Without many second thoughts, the liberal fringe turned right—and pointed left, with accusing fingers and hostile words.

The new cold war liberals were prepared to disown their history for both a personal and a practical reason. Many members of that generation found themselves facing choices in their own lives that required them to deny or redefine their earlier experiences. Whatever else the 1960s did, the decade seemed to promise its children an honest, humane, useful and communitarian life. Those promises were always exaggerated, and when they could not be fulfilled, the aging children labeled them "lies," and the whole decade a "failure." It was tempting for them to condemn the expectations when confronted by their own accommodations to a competitive, individualistic, illiberal and often inhumane world. And those who feared they had "sold out" resented those whose continued activity according to the old patterns of thought presented a constant reproach.

The practical reason for the turnaround was simple: the 1960s no longer sells. Liberals in government, the media and academe are the ideological entrepreneurs of the American system. Their power is that of the broker. In the last two decades they brokered peace in Vietnam and social tranquility, racial harmony and economic opportunity at home. It worked this way: liberals delivered the support, the votes and the good behavior of their constituents "at the base" to the political and corporate governors "at the top." The payoff, which the liberals negotiated, was civil rights legislation, a Vietnam settlement, antipoverty transfer payments to the underclass and relaxation of social and sexual norms.

Today the currency of payoffs is in short supply—or no supply at all. What the people at the top have to offer is national security, patriotism and good feelings about America: cold war values. And liberals must adapt to this new marketplace. The hysterical popular response to the Iranian hostage affair and the reception accorded the returning hostages, the celebration of the U.S. hockey team's Olympic victory over the Russians in 1980 and the great fear of Soviet military "superiority" all helped create an aggregate demand which the cold war liberals' entrepreneurial skills are now devoted to meeting.

### 50s' Issues and Icons

The personal and practical dynamic in the rise of the new cold war liberalism is also identifiable in the old version. The left of the 1930s also had a broad liberal fringe, which sympathized with the radical causes of the era in a vague, sentimental, nonideological way. Liberals then were generally approving of militant labor fights, the Spanish Civil War, resistance to fascism and the activities of the artistic avant-garde. After World War II, the liberals, now grown-up and settled in, pulled back, first into a self-absorbed apathy and privatism which anticipated the "personal liberation" and "human potential" movements of the 1970s, then into downright hostility to their past sympathies and to those who still maintained the old ideals. The liberals' transformation was accompanied by name-calling ("Stalinist") and name-naming ("fellow traveler"); they beat a retreat from the concerns of the radical decades to the safety of the cold war issues.

As the cold war culture spread across the land, the liberals began addressing new questions, or redefining old ones. They fought for the ownership of icons and issues. They began a debate over Freud: Is psychoanalysis a panacea for the individual or a means to social change? Over Marx: dead

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determinist or live methodologist? Over sociology: prescriptive or descriptive? Over philosophy: concerned with words or things?

The liberals sought to depoliticize all aspects of culture, to emphasize technique over ideology, the instrument over the idea. Daniel Bell's book *The End of Ideology* decreed the cessation of class struggle in America. The surviving form of liberalism was "managerial" rather than ideological; it offered a method for adjusting social imbalances rather than a blueprint for reforming society. The technical approach became the Democratic Party's "program" in the 1950s. Liberalism is, of course, nonrevolutionary by definition, and even in the headiest days of the New Deal, liberals opposed the transformation of the capitalist system. But with the death, or dormancy, of the radical left in the 1950s, liberalism lost even its reformist character, and it, too, became depoliticized.

Militarism, individualism and consumerism invaded the cultural life of the 1950s. The emblematic cold war television program was *Victory at Sea*, a Churchillian celebration of World War II, minus the politics. The representative novelists were J.D. Salinger, James Gould Cozzens and Ayn Rand. The dominant market icons were the TV set and the tail-fin automobile. Social criticism was aimed at the tasteless or debilitating effects of the political and economic system, not the system itself: Vance Packard on advertising (*The Hidden Persuaders*), David Riesman on alienation (*The Lonely Crowd*), William Whyte on suburban conformity (*The Organization Man*).

### The New Cold War Culture

The new cold war of the 1980s has already had similar success in reframing cultural discourse. A rapid and radical depoliticization has seized the country; it is obvious in the media, in the universities, in literature, in social criticism. There is even a depoliticization of politics itself. Public issues are not discussed in terms of power, justice, idealism and morality, as they were in the 1960s, but as a kind of theater, or a category of esthetics. Compare, for example, Joan Didion's *Salvador*, published this year, with the "literary" reportage of the Vietnam era: Susan Sontag's *Trip to Hanoi*, Mary McCarthy's *Vietnam*, Norman Mailer's *Armies of the Night*. Less high-flying reports are similarly depoliticized, and they evince a "pendulum" theory of history: things are one way, then the other, but nothing really changes. In the more starkly politicized journalism of the 1960s there was a sense of movement rather than stasis, of evolution (or revolution) rather than termination, of optimism rather than cynicism.

There are clashes over the issues and icons of the 1980s, corresponding to the cultural battles of the 1950s. Now there is a fight for Foucault and semiotics: tool for change or for analysis? For the Holocaust: failure of the human spirit or tragedy of the war against fascism? For Poland: working-class struggle or anti-Communist revolt? Even for peace: disarmament or deterrence? And for the history of decades and wars gone by: the 1930s, World War II, Vietnam, the McCarthy era, the 1960s.

Ever ready to grasp new issues and broker them to their customers, the liberal media have picked up on the new cold war culture and are selling it by the pound. Only a while ago, magazines were weighty with discussion of black oppression and insurgency, of youth's search for fulfillment through social transformation, of the Third World's valiant revolts, of women's quest for liberation through sexual politics. Now the journals are weighted with heavy metal subjects: missile deployment, weapons development, war strategy. Magazine covers are likely to feature figures of authority and success—Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, Chrysler chairman Lee Iacocca, French Cardinal Lustiger—rather than images of insurgency. Stories about the Third World conclude that revolutions have failed or will soon do so; stories about students say they are more interested in careers than in mindless rampage; stories about women report that they have rediscovered the delights of family life and are concerned about good salaries and fringe benefits; stories about crime focus on the need for more jails; stories about espionage rehearse old tales of Russian treachery rather than expose the misdeeds of C.I.A. agents.

Overall, there is a new cold war "spin" to the discussion of public policy and social issues. Militarism, individualism and consumerism are back in fashion. The first great TV show of the emerging culture was *The Winds of War*, a (long) brief for the cold war liberals in the contest for intellectual property rights to World War II, the Holocaust and attendant events. The debate over the role of the left in the

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McCarthy era has flared anew with the publication of William L. O'Neill's *A Better World*, which is subtitled *The Great Schism: Stalinism and the American Intellectuals*. O'Neill (and his sympathetic reviewers in *The New Republic* and the daily *New York Times*) argues once again that C.P. members and leftist intellectuals who refused to denounce American Communism were doing Stalin's work under the cloak of constitutional liberties. No historical debate can ever be finally settled, especially one in which the historical participants are still alive. But the O'Neill book arrives as an offensive weapon in a political fight: to discredit the left, to link what leftists thought with what Stalin did, to prove past guilt by association.

The world-shaking movements connecting personal and political change—feminism and gay liberation—have been transformed into little more than support systems for getting ahead and having it all. Betty Friedan, who inspired the first wave of militant feminism twenty years ago, now, in *The Second Stage*, argues for the traditional values of family life in a home full of upscale appointments. The impetus toward retrenchment in liberation ideology is rationalized in the name of realism or pragmatism—those reborn cold war virtues from the earlier age. Contempt for idealism and blindness to the visions of utopia are hallmarks of the emerging culture, for both idealism and utopianism are necessary for radical change.

## The Second Time Around

Analogies are logically imperfect. When historical events happen for the second time, as Marx remarked, they are likely to make farcical what was initially deadly tragic. The first cold war culture not only imposed a stultifying, conformist creed on creative work and thought. People really suffered. There were purges of leftists from unions, political parties, public organizations, the news media, academe, show business, publishing, government. The woods are full of "McCarthy victims" who survived. But a lot of them did not survive. They were all victims of the cold war liberals as well as of the McCarthyites. The liberals were well placed to do the hatchet jobs, the dirty work, for they were in charge of the great institutions sheltering the left.

Can it happen here, and now? In a very small sense, it may be happening already. Journalists who consider themselves (or are considered) leftists say that many publications that once welcomed their work for its trendiness have shut tight in recent months. The big corporate publishers, often subsidiaries of vast conglomerates, are showing less interest in issues as leftists frame them. Hollywood, which has not been markedly political since the 1940s, is extremely sensitive to the current ideological crosscurrents. One film released this year, *The Lords of Discipline*, which takes place in a Southern military academy, was set in 1964—pre-Gulf of Tonkin—rather than in 1966, when the novel on which it was based was set. The change was made to avoid any mention of the war in Vietnam, though it was crucial to the author's theme. It's a wonder *Reds* wasn't set in 1904. The unexpected success of the Academy Award-winning *Gandhi* seems like another symptom of cold war fever. The Mahatma, after all, was the favorite foreign rebel of Americans after World War II, the liberal alternative to China's revolutionary Mao Zedong.

As mentioned, the fiercest fighting is centered in the nuclear freeze and disarmament movement—the only place where an organized left politics is highly visible and active. In response to pressure from President Reagan and the Far Right, some moderate members of the movement have attempted to exclude Communists and radicals from the coalition groups. So far, the left is holding its own. But it is precisely in such coalitions that the new cold war liberals can be expected to move against the left.

Outside of the peace movement, the left today is dispersed, fragmented and isolated. It is even difficult to speak of "a left," a unitary, self-conscious political cohort such as existed before the old cold war. So the destructive tactics of the cold warriors—both the right-wing and liberal varieties—are inappropriate in the current situation.

But if there is not a left, there are leftists—that is, there are countless heirs to the political and countercultural traditions of the 1960s, as well as older radicals and newly organized sympathizers—who occupy positions (generally in the lower ranks) in the established liberal institutions: unions, schools and colleges, social welfare agencies, service organizations, the media and even government. They also can be found in thousands of activist organizations—tenant unions, environmental lobbies, labor insurgencies, legal aid offices, health groups, women's and homosexuals' support groups, foreign policy study and action projects. These, and many more, represent a largely innovative development in American institutional life. Their members are not always aware that they are playing a wider political role—that they constitute an ad hoc left or radical presence. At least, they do not function that way. But the presence is there, it is important, and it is felt. In a sense, the emergence of the new cold war is logically connected to the development of a new class of post-1960s activists. It is this new political class, however incoherently its politics and class demands are expressed, that the cold war liberals are engaging.

How successful the liberals will be in determining the course of the conflict is impossible to gauge. Cold war liberalism, in its new form, is a phenomenon whose meaning has only begun to "mean itself"; events that have yet to happen, developments that have yet to develop and consequences that have yet to occur will make the determination.

But at the core of the process is war—the militarization of American society, the obsession with national security, the preoccupation with loyalty, patriotism and power. War, Orwell said, is the engine that drives society. It is certainly the motivation for neoconservatism, the New Right and, now, cold war liberalism. The issue of war and peace has shaped every aspect of American policy in this century, from highway construction to education to economic strategies to the preservation of civil liberties. If the country moves toward war, the pressure will increase on all the forces in the land that seek to open institutions to popular participation, change and equality. If we move toward peace, the space for freedom will begin to expand again. □

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# BOOKS & THE ARTS.

## Blood Feuds

ARTHUR L. CAPLAN

THE AMERICAN BLOOD SUPPLY. *By Alvin W. Drake, Stan N. Finkelstein and Harvey M. Sapolsky. The MIT Press. 224 pp. $20.*

BLOOD: Gift or Merchandise. *By Piet J. Hagen. Alan R. Liss, Inc. 246 pp. $29.50.*

On March 4, the United States Public Health Service recommended that "sexually active homosexual men with multiple partners" be prohibited from donating or selling their blood. Gay men, the P.H.S. noted, are at increased risk of suffering from Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), a disease which may be transmitted by blood and blood products. Hemophiliacs and others who depend on blood supplies for life successfully lobbied the P.H.S. to take this controversial stand.

The current conflict between those who want to give away or sell their blood and those who need that blood has reopened an old debate about the best means of insuring a safe and sufficient blood supply. Happily, two books that critically examine the complexities of blood policy in America and around the world have recently been published.

Any discussion of blood policy must start with Richard Titmuss's 1971 book, *The Gift Relationship*, which succeeded in doing what few books have been able to do—discomfit professional economists. Cartels collapse, the prime rate meanders, unemployment skyrockets, the stock market takes yet another random walk, and economists merely yawn, secure in the knowledge that their models, forecasts and theories are couched in language so arcane as to make them almost totally invulnerable to intrusions from humdrum reality. To his everlasting credit, Titmuss's conclusions about the American and British systems of blood supply were so startling that even the stoic purveyors of the dismal science had to take notice.

Titmuss was a staunch defender of British socialized medicine and an unsympathetic observer of American fee-for-service health care. In the late 1960s, he set out to collect data on the performance of the two systems, using the supply of blood as his test. What he found annoyed defenders of the free market on both sides of the Atlantic.

Titmuss argued that the American blood-supply system was a mess. A market in blood, where diverse entrepreneurs paid donors a fee, produced only waste, shortages and inefficiency. Moreover, he charged, offering payment for blood encouraged donations from drug addicts and derelicts, resulting in a high incidence of hepatitis and death among recipients. Titmuss concluded that treating blood as a commodity rather than as a gift was a mistake for two reasons: the market could not be counted on to deliver enough high-quality blood to meet the growing medical need for transfusions; and the market was morally inferior to a system like Britain's that encouraged a sense of community and altruism among donors.

Titmuss's book set off a storm of controversy. Some American and British economists claimed he had seriously understated the blood shortages confronting the British National Health Service. Those responsible for overseeing blood supplies in the United States at both the Federal and state levels acted quickly to reduce the system's reliance on paid donors. Not a few city editors of newspapers and television stations suddenly realized that the long lines that formed every day in dilapidated buildings throughout their cities were actually made up of poor, even destitute persons selling their blood in order to eat or buy drugs. Chagrined, they ran exposés with such frequency that most Americans still believe blood banks are supplied by bleeding the poor for pay. In fact, thanks largely to Titmuss, most whole blood today comes from middle- and upper-class volunteers.

Both *The American Blood Supply* and *Blood: Gift or Merchandise* were written by men who cannot resist looking over their shoulders at Titmuss's study. Drake, Finkelstein and Sapolsky—respectively, an operations research expert, a physician and a political scientist, all on the faculty of M.I.T.—set out to repair what they see as the damage done by Titmuss's politicized inquiry. Piet Hagen, a Dutch newspaper editor, attempts to understand the complex international trade in blood that has developed over the last decade. Both books are chockablock with tables, charts, statistics and surveys that are likely to appeal only to those with a passionate interest in the world of blood. But it would be most unfortunate if these volumes failed to engage a broader audience, for they go to the heart of the current controversy over who should and should not be allowed to donate or sell blood. They vividly illustrate how organizational chaos is a central cause of the poor quality control that makes diseases like AIDS such a threat to the integrity of the blood supply.

The M.I.T. group sets out to explode Titmuss's claim that the British system of voluntary donation is more successful, morally or monetarily, than the American. The authors' most telling point against him is their rejection of altruism as the source for quality in the British blood-supply system. In his ideologically inspired frenzy to extol gift-giving, they caustically observe, Titmuss made no effort to establish the general rates of hepatitis in the American and British populations. Titmuss assumed that by paying donors, American blood banks encouraged contributions from those most likely to have contagious hepatitis—and to a modest extent, this was true. However, Drake et al. point out that the rates of hepatitis endemic in any particular population vary from group to group: blacks and Asians have higher rates than whites, men higher than women, the middle-aged higher than the young. Age and race appear to have far more to do with the likelihood that donated blood is contaminated than does paying or not paying for it.

Sweden, which pays all of its blood donors, has a very low rate of infection relative to the United States and Britain. Japan, which has an essentially all-volunteer system, has a very high rate. In the M.I.T. group's view, the low

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disease rate in Britain results more from the use of British blood than from a reliance on voluntarism. They note that the British National Transfusion Service studiously avoids collecting blood at factories and other places where there might be higher concentrations of Asians or blacks, and that blood collected from persons born in Africa, Asia or the Caribbean is labeled high risk and often not used.

*The American Blood Supply* also sets out to refute the claim that paying for blood undercuts people's willingness to donate. On the basis of surveys of eligible donors in the United States, the authors argue that the rate of blood donation depends on recruitment and opportunity, not on attitudes about the morality of selling or giving blood.' Moreover, they contend, the American system of acquiring blood does *not* lead to chronic shortages, as Titmuss charged. In fact, the system we now have (which bears more of a resemblance to that extolled by Titmuss than the authors seem willing to admit) does a remarkably good job.

One of the most interesting sections of the M.I.T. group's book recounts the history of the battle between the American Red Cross and private blood banks for control of the blood supply.

# Four Poems

## TALKING

Whatever I talk about is yesterday
by the time I see anything it has gone
the only way I can see today
is as yesterday

I talk with words I remember
about what has already happened
what I want to talk about is no longer there
it is not there

today I saw only what I remember
even when I am speaking of today
nobody else remembers what I remember
not even the names

I tell parts of a story
that once occurred
and I laugh with surprise at what disappeared
though I remember it so well

## PALM

The palm is in no hurry
to be different
and it grows slowly
it knows how to be a palm
when it was a seed it knew
how to be a palm seed
when it was a flower
it knew how to be
the flower of a palm
when it was a palm it grew
slowly
and without eyes
in a salt wind

## PHOTOGRAPH

After he died
they found the picture
that he had kept looking for
and had thought was lost
all those years

they did not know
how it had hung in the mind
of someone who could not find it
they did not even
know whose face
that was supposed to be

## BERRYMAN

I will tell you what he told me
in the years just after the war
as we then called
the second world war

don't lose your arrogance yet he said
you can do that when you're older
lose it too soon and you may
merely replace it with vanity

just one time he suggested
changing the usual order
of the same words in a line of verse
why point out a thing twice

he suggested I pray to the Muse
get down on my knees and pray
right there in the corner and he
said he meant it literally

it was in the days before the beard
and the drink but he was deep
in tides of his own through which he sailed
chin sideways and head tilted like a tacking sloop

he was far older than the dates allowed for
much older than I was he was in his thirties
he snapped down his nose with an accent
I think he had affected in England

as for publishing he advised me
to paper my walls with rejection slips
his lips and the bones of his long fingers trembled
with the vehemence of his views about poetry

he said the great presence
that permitted everything and transmuted it
in poetry was passion
passion was genius and he praised movement and invention

I had hardly begun to read
I asked how can you ever be sure
that what you write is really
any good at all and he said you can't

you can't you can never be sure
you die without knowing
whether anything you wrote was any good
if you have to be sure don't write

*W.S. Merwin*

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The Red Cross began its association with blood donation during World War II and has remained involved ever since, partially as a means of staying alive between floods and fires. Private nonprofit and for-profit blood banks also arose in the postwar years, in response to the increasing demand for blood occasioned by medical and surgical advances. These groups warred for almost thirty years—a shaky truce, mostly favoring the Red Cross, emerging only during the 1970s. Drake et al. blame this rivalry, along with a shortage of full-time professionals within the Red Cross and the smaller private blood banks, for whatever want and waste Titmuss found. (Today, blood banking is primarily a nonprofit, highly professionalized activity, but this should not blind us, they warn, to the fact that nonprofit health care needs as much governmental scrutiny and supervision as do for-profit activities.)

The squabbling that characterized the American experience with blood donation throughout the postwar years carries another moral, though, which has escaped the authors of *The American Blood Supply*. It may be true that paying for blood does not in and of itself necessarily increase the risk of hepatitis. It may also be true that the British are more than a little hypocritical when they decry commercialism in American medicine while practicing methods of blood collection that can only be described as tacitly racist. It nevertheless remains true, as Titmuss correctly understood, that a market in blood or any other medically useful substance creates problems of shortage, waste and diminished quality. For the reason so many organizations, speculators, profiteers and institutions got into the blood-banking business in America after World War II was precisely that blood banking was treated as a business by both the government and health professionals.

Whatever the flaws of Britain's system, and no reader of either of these books could come away thinking there are none, at least the country has a stable and unitary means of obtaining, storing and dispensing blood. The American system, as is the case anywhere that competition obtains, consisted until recently of many small businesses, each with its own quirks, interests, ideals and resources. While such a system may work when it comes to supplying buyers with beer or butter, it is far less appealing when it comes to


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## Translation

Baudelaire's LES FLEURS DU MAL
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guaranteeing so precious and vital a resource as blood; indeed, it can prove fatal to those unlucky enough to live in an area serviced by a small entrepreneurial enterprise with low standards of quality and a keen sense of the bottom line. While the M.I.T. group does not say so, the fact is that the need to bring some semblance of order to the American blood supply system is a direct result of a blind commitment to competition, commercial and noncommercial, in blood banking. That encouraging a host of mom and pop enterprises is simply not a rational way to provide medical necessities is shown by many dire examples in the health care field, from eye banks to nursing homes.

According to Piet Hagen, the sale of blood still flourishes in the United States: it has simply evolved, along with improvements in disease detection and blood technology, into a different form. Since Titmuss's day, medicine has become less dependent on whole blood by utilizing blood parts, such as plasma. Plasma is much less vulnerable to infection by hepatitis, but donating it is a time-consuming and debilitating process. However, since plasma collection requires a small number of donors and since donors can give again and again, it does not make demands on the moral conscience of the middle and upper classes. Today, plasma collection is a rapidly growing, quarter-billion-dollar-a-year business, which depends primarily on paid donors.

There are many countries—Britain, France and Japan, for example—that continue to prohibit payment for blood donations of any kind. Ironically, these nations are almost entirely dependent on the United States and its paid plasma donors for vital blood products and blood fractions. It is only by laundering both blood and money through a host of international conglomerates and corporations that the illusion is allowed to persist that altruism alone can be relied upon to fulfill the world demand for blood.

The key issue is not, as Titmuss thought, whether to allow or prohibit the sale of blood; it is whether a competitive market, including both for-profit and nonprofit organizations, is the best way of assuring a safe, reliable and sufficient supply of blood. Given the inefficiencies, inequalities and insensitivities that have characterized the competitive market for whole blood in the United States over the past forty years, one would think that health care is one area where we might want to trust to something more than the unregulated movements of an invisible hand. □

# Elaborate and Perverse

LORE DICKSTEIN

ARARAT. *By D.M. Thomas. The Viking Press. 191 pp. $13.50.*

The reader opens *Ararat* with a mixture of expectations. D.M. Thomas's third novel in four years, it comes in the wake of the literary and commercial success of *The White Hotel*, and the more equivocal reception accorded his translations of Pushkin's poems, *The Bronze Horseman*, which Simon Karlinsky and others have called a plagiarism of other translators. While *Ararat* will do little to dispel the doubts that hang over Thomas's literary reputation, it may help clarify what he considers to be authorship.

The question here is not that of plagiarism but of literary license and influence. It is axiomatic that translators rely on the inspiration of their original authors, but Thomas seems to have based most of his *fiction* on this premise. As a novelist, he has taken the liberties of a translator, catapulting his books on the backs of other, more brilliant writers. In *The White Hotel*, he cited his sources openly, although not the extent of his borrowings. His fictional case study of the libidinous Lisa Erdman cleverly mimics Freud's writing style, but his evocation of the massacre at Babi Yar uses Anatoli Kuznetsov's *Babi Yar* with a directness for which it was criticized in England. In the acknowledgments to *The Flute Player* (1979), Thomas notes, "Quotations ascribed in this novel to two of the fictional characters are from: Akhmadulina, Akhmatova, Baudelaire, Chapman, Dante, Emily Dickinson, Eliot, Frost, Lorca, Mandelstam, Nadezhda Mandelstam, Pasternak, Sylvia Plath, Pushkin, Rilke, Anne Sexton, Shakespeare, Gaspara Stampa, Tsvetaeva, and Yeats"—a literary pantheon which makes for some striking dialogue in an otherwise undistinguished novel. The author's note in *Ararat* mentions similiar debts: the Russian poets Pushkin and Blok; the Armenian poets Nareg and Emin; the historian of Armenia Christopher Walker.

What Thomas does with his source material, how he creates a "new" work out of the works of others, is *Ararat*'s subject as well as its method. This is a novel of improvisations, a set of variations on the theme of improvisation. Reading it is like being caught in one of those elaborate and perverse boxwood mazes favored by English landscape architects. It is intricately designed, all appearances and cleverness, yet ultimately lacking in rationale. The path keeps turning in on itself; the markings are confusingly similar; the reader exits impressed but reeling.

Bracketed by a prologue and an epilogue, *Ararat* is presented from the perspective of one Sergei Rozanov, a fictional Russian poet well known for his inventiveness. Rozanov is spending the night with a student, but disenchanted with the woman's fawning admiration and bored sexually, he spins out the thread of the novel: Three writers—a Russian, an American and an Armenian—each agree to improvise a story on a common theme, improvisation. "It's just a game," Rozanov tells the student, discounting his facility, "like doing crosswords."

There are three main stories within Rozanov's improvisations, two of which lean heavily on Pushkin's unfinished prose-verse work, *Egyptian Nights*, which itself is about the art of literary improvisation. Rozanov begins with the Russian, a depressed and feverish poet, Victor Surkov, who is on an ocean voyage to the United States. On board ship are an assortment of female Olympic athletes, some of whom end up in Surkov's bed, and an ancient-mariner type named Finn, a spectral figure who claims to have been involved in every atrocity of the twentieth century: the Armenian massacre in 1915, Babi Yar, Dachau, Buchenwald and more. Finn is always eagerly plucking at Surkov's sleeve, interrupting the poet's fantasies and sexual activities with graphic tales of barbarity. As in *The White Hotel*, this intermingling of sex and death creates a heightened, surreal atmosphere in which eroticism and torture, orgasms and dying, blend into one another.

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In one of the many shifts of identity in the novel, Surkov imagines he is Pushkin writing *Egyptian Nights*. Thomas's translation of Pushkin's fragment is included here in its entirety. At the last line, Surkov as Pushkin is interrupted by a visitor; this is a wonderful leap into the past, to that moment when Pushkin put down his pen. "It is irritating to be interrupted like this," Pushkin/Surkov/Rozanov/Thomas remarks, "just at the point where inspiration failed before."

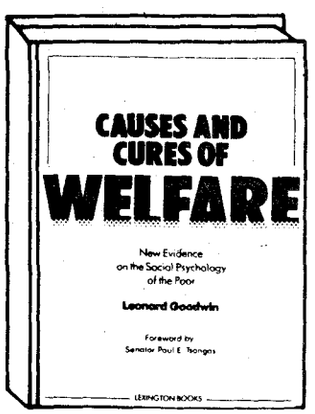
Written in 1835, Pushkin's *Egyptian Nights* is the story of a Russian poet, Charsky, who is visited unexpectedly by an Italian *improvvisatore*, a sort of wandering poetic entertainer. Penniless and down on his luck, the Italian asks Charsky to set up a recitation for him at a wealthy home. Impressed by the Italian's skill at composing on command a verse on the theme of poetic inspiration, Charsky agrees. At the recitation, a number of topics are submitted by the audience; the one selected by lot is "Cleopatra and her lovers." The *improvvisatore*, in verse, tells the story of how Cleopatra agrees to make love to three men, but the price for enjoying the Queen's favors is death. (Cleopatra's "bed of love and death" would be of obvious appeal to Thomas.)

In what is the best writing in this novel, Surkov picks up where Pushkin left off in *Egyptian Nights* and completes the *improvvisatore*'s verse without losing a beat. In Surkov's completed version, Cleopatra's third lover, never identified in the Pushkin, is her son by her brother Ptolemy. (This little piece of incestuous pornography is not beyond the imaginative scope of Pushkin, who wrote a scandalous poem, "The Gavriliad," in which the Virgin Mary, frustrated by the lack of sexual attention from Joseph, makes love to the angel Gabriel, God and Satan.) The *improvvisatore*'s poem completed, Surkov resumes the narrative of *Egyptian Nights*; the various turns and permutations of his plot, which mirror actual events in Pushkin's life, are a delightful sleight of hand. After this bravura performance the rest of *Ararat* pales considerably.

Surkov, dissatisfied with the way he has ended Pushkin's tale, starts again and concludes *Egyptian Nights* in just a few pages of prose. The second improvisation also uses facts from Pushkin's life, but this time the story seems arbitrary and contrived. The absurdist ending, in which the *improvvisatore* is beheaded during the Decembrist uprising (an event Pushkin fortuitously missed), feels as if the author—Thomas, Rozanov, Surkov?—had tired of the game and decided to finish his hero off quickly.

Rozanov then presents another version of Surkov's trip to America. In this utterly banal story, Surkov flies from Russia to Kennedy International Airport, where he is greeted by his hostess, an Armenian sculptor, and a goon squad of reporters. The press's inane questions—"Why do Russian poets have such good memories?" "How do you feel about being middle-aged?"—are matched by Surkov's crass answers. (One utterance by this thoroughly unlikable character, however, fairly leaps from the page. In response to a question about a novelist's supposed plagiarism, Surkov replies: "All art is collaboration, a translation if you like. But plagiarism is a different matter.")

The rest of Surkov's story and the remaining pages of *Ararat*, which, as far as I can tell, are entirely of Thomas's invention, are disappointing and lifeless. The dialogue is flat; the plot meanders aimlessly. Thomas seems to do his best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work in collaboration with other authors. Rozanov's two other improvisers—the American and the Armenian—are barely realized and are devoid of interest or motivation. The occasional allusions to Armenia and its dominant geographic feature, Mount Ararat, seem intended to hint at broader associations—a destroyed country, a people with a "problem" whose "solution" was used by Hitler as a paradigm—but they have no apparent relevance to the novel's form or content.

In *The White Hotel*, the variations of Lisa Erdman's story, presented in verse, in prose narrative and in case history, echo hauntingly throughout the novel. The telling and retelling of Lisa's story is what gives the novel coherence. In *Ararat*, once Thomas leaves Pushkin, his prime source of inspiration, the writing seems tossed off, unpolished, like incomplete entries in a journal. It is as if knowing he has captivated us with his cleverness, Thomas holds us in contempt for our admiration. □

# The Jewish Stanislavsky

BRINA CAPLAN

HUNGRY HEARTS. *By Francine Prose. Pantheon Books. 213 pp. $12.95.*

Who are the "hungry hearts" of Francine Prose's sixth novel? They are the early New York audience for Yiddish theater, immigrants who shushed crying babies while they themselves wept or kibitzed or talked back to the actors. During performances, they unloaded carpetbags of food, unwrapped pastrami sandwiches, peeled fruit. What they brought in those carpetbags was kosher; what was served to them on stage was *treyf*, according to the narrator, Dinah Rappoport, an actress in her 80s looking back on the beginning of her career. There were plagiarisms of contemporary plays, silly melodramas about suffering motherhood, Yiddished Shakespeare—with the dialogue of, say, *The Jewish King Lear* dependent less on any text than on the star's whims.

Leon Dalashinsky changed all this, Dinah tells us. Founder and director of the Yiddish Art Theater, Dalashinsky disciplined both his actors and his audiences. Gone from one side of the footlights were the hokey dramas and impromptu lines; gone from the other side were the thermoses of tea and squalling infants. Dalashinsky worked a sort of magic, which, as Dinah explains, was the magic of "method." "The Jewish Stanislavsky," she says, referred to Stanislavsky as "the Russian Dalashinsky." By 1921, when she joined Dalashinsky's ensemble company, what had been a communal activity had become an art form. Dinah admits to wondering, even at the time, about the price paid:

> Because right in the midst of this victory for civilization, I missed those oranges, that pastrami. For all my faith in Dalashinsky, in art, I mourned those hungry hearts. Nostalgic for a milieu I'd never really known, I imagined . . . a theater of happy endings where sweethearts were always reunited, kingdoms restored, prodigal children returned—and where the voices heard were not from the grave, but from life.

Well might she question the cost of voices from the grave, for her first major role requires her to produce one. Dinah plays Leah Sender, a girl possessed by the spirit of her departed lover, in Anski's dour classic, *The Dybbuk*. In the original Vilna staging, the dybbuk's voice had issued from the wings; the actress merely mouthed the lines. Dalashinsky, however, coaxes, coaches and bullies Dinah into a vocal tour de force. He also insists that she keep absolutely secret her recent marriage to Benno Brownstein, who plays Leah's lover: fidelity to Anski's text demands separated sweethearts. "What will happen to our sense of truth," Dalashinsky cries, "when the curtain rings down . . . and the crowd thinks, 'So what? Now the newlyweds can run home and hop into bed'?"

By insisting that life imitate art, Dalashinsky gets results. The newlyweds comply, and the wiseacres, complainers and eccentrics of the Yiddish Art Theater turn out golden performances. Yet early on there are signs that something is awry. Secrecy excludes Dinah's parents from the joy of celebrating her marriage, and she finds herself prattling to them self-importantly about life and art. Moreover, when the

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company embarks on its South American tour, she loses her passion for Benno and, simultaneously, falls into a near trance of reverence for Dalashinsky, as though he really were the Svengali her father accuses him of being.

On opening night in Buenos Aires, when Dinah tries to speak the lines of Anski's dybbuk, what issues forth is the speech—sometimes the favorite song—of a local hero, a rebellious, lovelorn boy, who died in an airplane accident while showing off for the woman he had lost. Dinah is possessed. The company flees to Montevideo on the theory that "five hundred miles is an awfully long way for a dybbuk to travel." Alas, it's no distance at all, and the ministrations of a physician, a Reform rabbi and a psychoanalyst prove equally futile.

Finally, in desperation, the company turns to the Hasid known as "the Schvartze Rabbi," who reminds Dinah of "a cross between the Baal Shem and Emiliano Zapata." Difficult as she finds it to trust a rabbi in knickers and rainbow-striped knee socks, the Schvartze Rabbi clearly has powers. Every Sabbath he feeds an entire congregation from a single omelet that he cooks himself, an omelet which somehow tastes to each recipient like his favorite meal. In an ad hoc exorcism, which the Rabbi conducts in a kosher meatpacking plant in the slums of Montevideo, identities are sorted out and relations set right between illusion and substance, art and life, parents and child, husband and wife.

Perhaps, Dinah speculates, "what happened happened because Leon Dalashinsky took us on tour to South America, to the other side of the world—where everything was upside down and a different gravity" prevailed. But truth to tell, gravity in a Francine Prose novel is always a little strange. *Marie Laveau*, her third book, dealt with spells, conjury and prophetic dreams in nineteenth-century New Orleans; *The Glorious Ones*, her second, was narrated in part by a dead Renaissance actor who leaves heaven to check up on his earthly fame. In fact, what gives her fiction its charm is just this ability to create worlds with dimensions more flexible and boundaries more fluid than our own—but which feel, nonetheless, comfortably familiar. It is no mischance that the demon that possessed Dinah was in life Pincus (Paco) Engelhart, son of the best dentist in Buenos Aires.

Even so, like Dinah, Prose is not entirely in control of her performances. At times, her exuberant storytelling could use more careful management. In *Hungry Hearts*, the conflict between high art and communal tradition presented at the outset is never resolved, and there are discrepancies in tone, as well: How does a rabbi in South America in 1921—even a wonder-working rabbi in rainbow knee socks—come to mouth a phrase like "modern technology"? But if such questions must be asked, they need not be pressed. Although Prose does not answer them, she does respond to one of our most enduring reasons for reading fiction, our wish to be delighted. Her sixth novel offers a story of "sweethearts reunited . . . prodigal children returned" and order restored. It's food for the hungry heart. □

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# MUSIC.

## LINDA SANDERS

### Chamber Orchestras

Fifteen or twenty years ago chamber orchestras were rare, and almost as far outside the mainstream of instrumental music as original-instrument ensembles. But like health food and small cars, they have become a common and presumably vital part of modern taste. That they are common needs no greater evidence than the Sunday paper; that they constitute a vital part of our musical life is more dubious, or so I felt after sampling four European ensembles at Carnegie Hall in March.

Chamber orchestras have no strictly defined personnel or function, and the four groups at Carnegie Hall represented a good many of the mix-and-match possibilities: they can be relatively large and perform without a conductor, like the Prague Chamber Orchestra, or small and perform *with* a conductor, like Italy's I Solisti Aquilani. They can perform as glorified accompanists for a major soloist, like the New Irish Chamber Orchestra with James Galway; or as ensembles of international stature in their own right, like the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. They can play anything that requires more instruments than, say, the Schubert "Octet" and fewer than the "Eroica" (though with Michael Tilson Thomas's Beethoven recordings, even *that* doesn't hold). The greatest similarities between the concerts these four ensembles gave were that three of them were disappointing, and three of them played one or more Vivaldi concertos.

Galway was in fine fettle for his appearance with the New Irish Chamber Orchestra on the Sunday afternoon before St. Patrick's Day. The first half of the program comprised Bach's Flute Concerto in A minor (BWV 1044) and the Suite No. 2 in B minor (BWV 1067), with its very prominent flute part. As usual, Galway dominated the proceedings; his playing is quite literally clean as a whistle, an approach that grows more welcome as the standard for good flute sound increasingly becomes one that is strangled with vibrato. As for his conducting, little was needed and little was done, though he did plunge rather awkwardly (but to no ill effect) into the program's seasonal piece, Arthur Duff's "Irish Suite for Strings," a mildly pleasing bit of Irish Muzak. He closed the program with a trio of Vivaldi concertos—that is, two too many.

The orchestra (a dozen strings plus harpsichord) matches Galway's style well—particularly his unsentimental legato—but its function was too accompanimental to have much character. The low strings were sometimes a bit out of tune and the violas barely audible, but the four first violins were remarkable in their blend, often achieving the eerie, hollow effect that results from functionally "perfect" intonation.

The other small string group I heard, I Solisti Aquilani, is a fifteen-year-old ensemble conducted by its founder, Vittorio Antonellini. The group began with its own trio of Vivaldi concertos, the first of which was the Concerto for Strings and Harpsichord in A major (F. XI, n. 4). Here, and in the closing piece, Sacchini's unremarkable Sonata in B flat major for Strings, the orchestra had delicacy and polish, and as much verve as an ensemble of this sort can muster without forcing. As *solisti*, though, the musicians were more tenuous. Concertmaster Mario Ferraris played the solo part in the Concerto in E minor (Op. 11, No. 2), "Il Favorito," with a lyric beauty that was unfortunately marred by what appeared to be a common case of nerves. Maurizio Gambini and David Cole, the soloists in the Concerto in G minor No. 2 for two cellos, strings and harpsichord (F. III, n. 2), played with considerable visual panache, but since much of their sound was lost in the hall, it's difficult to say how much of that panache was actually in the playing.

Double bass virtuoso Gary Karr was the guest soloist in the second half. Playing the Eccles Sonata in A minor, the Bloch "Prayer" from "Sketches of a Jewish Life" and the silly Bottesini "Tarantella" as an encore, Karr gave his routine performance on that impossible instrument—that is, he played with an ability that borders on the extraterrestrial.

The Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, probably the world's best-known chamber orchestra, has three performance wings: the full chamber orchestra conducted by Neville Marriner; a wind and string octet; and a sixteen-member group of strings and harpsichord directed by violinist Iona Brown from the concertmaster's chair. This last group came to Carnegie Hall on March 22. Its program, in some respects the most substantial of the four I heard, included two works that are chamber orchestra classics, if not yet warhorses—Grieg's "Holberg Suite" and Tchaikovsky's "Serenade for Strings"—as well as Handel's Concerto Grosso (Op. 6, No. 11) and Vivaldi's Concerto for Four Violins in B minor (Op. 3, No. 10).

The playing was not all it could have been. Iona Brown's direction is fierce and dramatic, but the shock waves she sets off do not seem to carry throughout the orchestra. Intonation was generally as impeccable as it is reputed to be, and the ensemble as precise; but the musical approach was drab in some pieces, forced and hollow in others and unsupported by any richness of sound.

The Academy was one of the first ensembles to insist upon performing seventeenth- and eighteenth-century music with the proper forces, and it set something of a standard for the orchestras that have followed. Yet this string group's personnel was not at all typical, with a disproportionately large number of violins (six firsts and four seconds) as compared with the lower strings (two violas, two cellos and one bass). While this minimal cello-bass arrangement may be adequate for Handel, it is ludicrous for the Tchaikovsky serenade and even for the "Holberg Suite." In places where the string sections are divided, half the violin section plays a line that is then continued or answered by a solo viola or solo cello, which makes for a quite different and mismatched sound. Balance is not just a matter of instruments being too loud or too soft—it also lies in the character of the sound. One viola playing forte does not, contrary to what the Academy appears to believe, sound the same as two violas playing mezzo forte.

This is a small problem but an irritating one, and it points to some of the drawbacks of the chamber orchestra craze. These days we sneer at Stokowski's transcriptions of Bach, but don't bat an eye at a feeble, undermanned performance of the Tchaikovsky serenade, which is just as "wrong" and about one tenth as entertaining. We go to hear small groups perform

*Linda Sanders's articles and reviews have appeared in* The New York Times, Fanfare, The Soho News *and* Saturday Review.

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music with the proper transparency and clarity, but in halls that are too large to allow the instruments to make a visceral impact, as if Vivaldi were the most popular composer of his day solely on the basis of his intellectual rigor. With surprising frequency, too, it is taken for granted that we will be thrilled by the opportunity to hear a very ordinary piece whose main virtue appears to be that it was ignored for a couple of centuries.

The irony is that chamber orchestras may already be anachronistic in terms of the very repertory that spawned them. As original-instrument ensembles increase in number and proficiency, many people are finding them as preferable to groups like the Academy as the Academy was once found preferable to large symphonies. The pure sound that ensembles like these bring to Baroque music was once a relief and delight; now it can sound bland next to the texture, definition and bite of period instruments. The chamber orchestras with the most to offer these days are therefore not the smallish string ensembles that must focus on Baroque music but slightly larger mixed ensembles like the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the "Y" Chamber Symphony, and Orpheus, which can and do cover a wide territory. The Prague Chamber Orchestra, which played on March 17, is one of these, and it offered a glimpse of the medium at its best.

Unlike the Academy, it brought along the whole orchestra, including winds. Its program was also more varied, with Mozart's "Don Giovanni" Overture, Honegger's "Pastorale d'été," Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto No. 1 in G minor, with soloist Boris Krajny, and the Concerto da camera for string orchestra by the contemporary East European composer Josef Ceremuga. Performing without a conductor, the ensemble was sometimes ragged, and almost never reached the level of finesse that was routine in the other concerts. But the final piece on the program, Dvorak's Suite in D major, "Czech Suite," simply glowed with warmth and showed a flair that none of the other groups approached. The Prague players had the advantage of playing a piece they are at home with, on the right instruments, with forces just large enough to do it justice and to fill Carnegie Hall. With more performances like this, chamber orchestras should be thriving for many years to come. □


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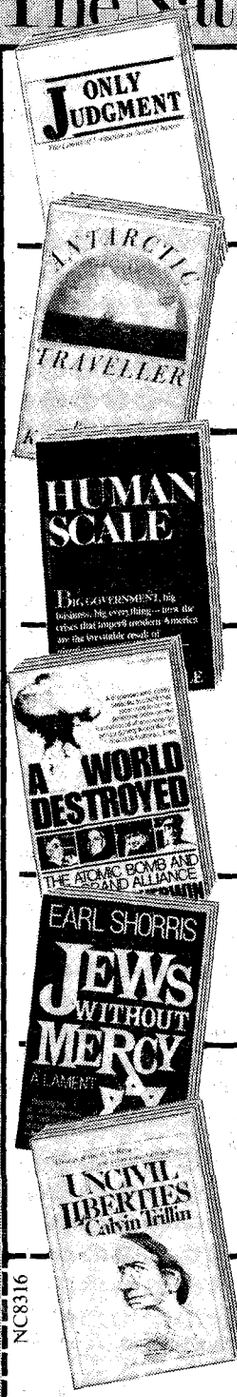


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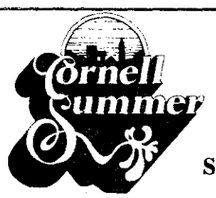


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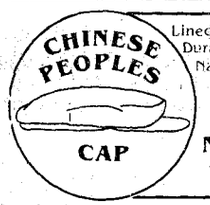


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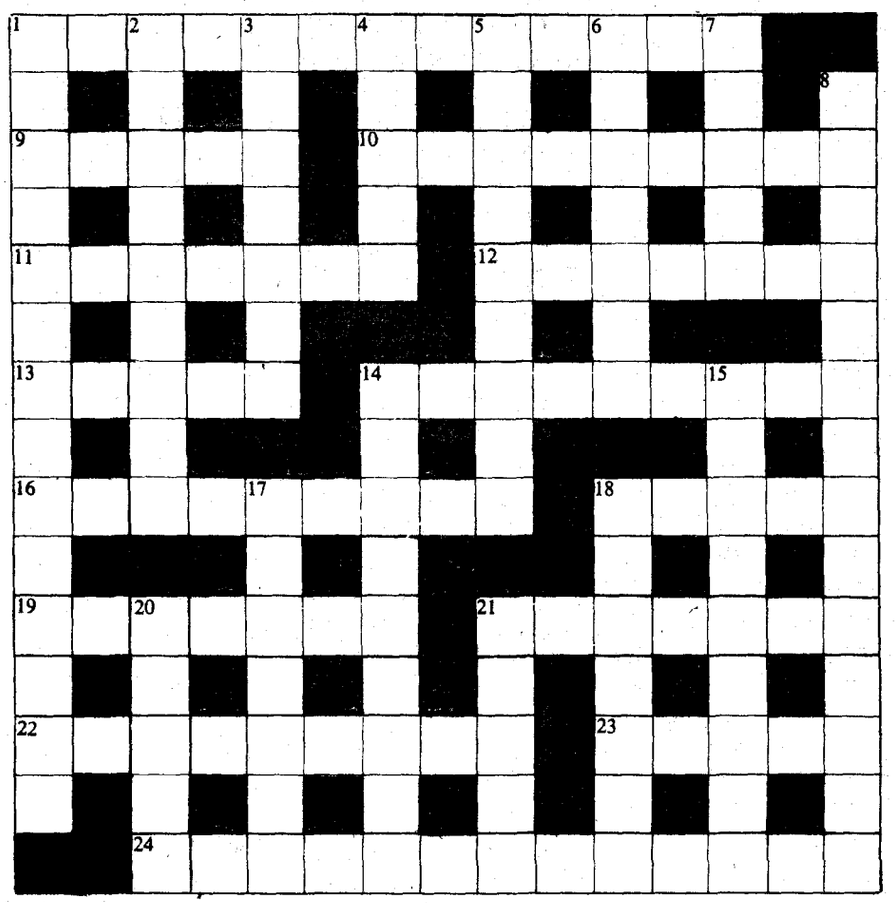
# Crossword Puzzle No. 1959

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Typhoid Mary wasn't so easily found, perhaps—trains with such, however. (6,7)
9 Sits and sets a problem. (5)
10 How things are said to come out where you might find a dry bed. (2,3,4)
11 What redheads are supposed to have with a method of painting. (7)
12 Your old desk might have what you might expect to find on the hamburger. (4,3)
13 A well-known Oliver in a secret society? (5)
14 Logical discussion perhaps cited with the laic sort. (9)
16 It wasn't his Roundhead who was laughing. (5,4)
18 Jabber? Not really in such a game! (5)
19 The character of select radio programs? (PBS, most likely!) (7)
21 Get on the track once again, when Jimmy comes back to the point. (7)
22 *Auster*, by Norman Douglas? (5,4)
23 It's a large order on board! (5)
24 One from Oklahoma, alternatively not so early—perhaps inevitably so. (6,2,5)

DOWN

1 Not necessarily confined to Washington misdoers, people used to lose their heads because of it. (7,7)
2 With the service, I objectively help up those that are supposed to spread the word. (4,5)
3 Is one translation of "bec" nose—though hardly a decent one? (7)
4 Feature a foreign land being this! (5)
5 Is the object of such club members to do good turns? (9)
6 It sounds more like a moving glacier, but it still could be dangerous. (3,4)
7 Possibly a sort of joint, as the British say. (5)
8 Chips, perhaps—or at least a sort of chips with E's partner confused about it. (5,9)
14 Put things into play, possibly . . . (9)
15 . . . or break things up if you don't mean to have a role. (4,5)
17 Armstrong, commonly—the Man with the Horn. (7)
18 If sort of fat, taking a pill around it could be dangerous. (7)
20 Possibly the family of Silver in the serial was on the stage some time ago . . . (5)
21 . . . capable of an important part in this performance. (5)

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